

# Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā

Śrīla Rāmacandra Goswāmī  
(Rāmāi Ṭhākura)

With the Commentary of  
Prabhupād Premgopāl Goswāmī

Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā by Rāmāi Ṭhākura (1533 – 1583)

Translated by Advaita Dāsa (used with permission)

Commentaries transcribed from the public lectures of Premgopal Gosvāmī:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thnN\\_JfVtsA&list=PLqeiYUb5-I8gOgm03687PugR8GK0krwCy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thnN_JfVtsA&list=PLqeiYUb5-I8gOgm03687PugR8GK0krwCy)

Dedicated to Prabhupād Śrīla Premgopāl Gosvāmī who opened his heart and shared with us his love for Anaṅga Mañjarī in his Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā talks.

It is also dedicated to Aindra Dāsa who loved Anaṅga Mañjarī with all his heart and was her true follower.

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## Introduction

Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā is an essential scripture for those practicing *sādhana-bhajana* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's confidential pastimes in Vraja. I am not the speaker of this *kathā*, I am only like a parrot narrating what is mentioned in this scripture by Śrīla Rāmacandra Goswāmī, also known as Rāmāi Ṭhākura.

We have to know who Anaṅga Mañjarī is, and why she is so important for our *bhajana*. Without her blessings, we cannot enter into the confidential pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Her blessings actually mean the mercy of Doyāl Nitāi, without which there is no question of attaining *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Rāmacandra Goswāmī, the author, is the intimate disciple and adopted son of Jāhnavā Ṭhākuraṇī. He was the only one qualified to write this scripture as he was fully empowered by Jāhnavā Mātā to reveal the confidential truths of her eternal *svarūpa* as Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī.

Sampuṭikā means a small treasure box which is used to offer beautiful items, like sweets and betel nuts, as a mouth refresher, for Rādhā-Govinda pleasure. This Sampuṭikā is a jewel box, containing some of the confidential *tattva* of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī, who appeared in Gaura *līlā* as Śrī Jāhnavā Mātā. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is opening this treasure box for us in his Sampuṭikā.

The author has revealed not only the confidential *tattva* regarding Anaṅga Mañjarī, but has also elucidated many transcendental secrets and pastimes for those who sincerely aspire to serve the Divine Couple in *mañjarī bhāva* – the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's maidservants – in the *nikuñja-līlās* of Vraja. If we follow the guidance given here, we can learn something about the various kinds of loving service which the *mañjarīs* perform for the pleasure of Rādhā-Govinda.

Attempting this *kathā* is like trying to touch the sky or like a dwarf trying to catch the moon. Yet, by the mercy of Rāmāi Ṭhākura we may get a glimpse of these confidential, transcendental *līlās* of the Divine Couple and develop some desire to render them loving service.

It is important to point out that one must be extremely cautious while relishing these pastimes. We must keep in mind that Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *līlās* are transcendental. The reader should not think of these intimate, sublime *nikuñja* pastimes as mundane lusty activities of this material world. These

*līlās* are beyond anything of this mundane world. They are meant for helping one's *līlā-smaraṇa* and for relishing the sweetness of *rāgānuga-bhakti bhajana*, which is full of *rasa*, sacred rapture.

We should listen to these explanations in a proper mood of detachment. No comparison should appear in the mind regarding any mundane concepts. This is why everything about *rāgānuga bhajana* is kept very confidential. It would not be wise to reveal all this *rasika kathā* to just anyone, especially those who still maintain mundane material attachments. If any mundane thoughts or associations arise in one's mind while reading about the beauty and the secret pastimes of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one should avoid reading it.

Before we start reading these descriptions about Anaṅga Mañjarī and her intimate pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, we must be clearly aware that what we are reading is *not* an ordinary boy-girl love affair of this material world. Rather, it is completely pure and transcendental. Although it may seem like mundane lusty activity, it is beyond all that we can possibly perceive with our mundane mind and senses. Under no circumstances should we compare this divine love play with our mundane experience of love.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has revealed in this Samputikā what no one else has ever revealed elsewhere. Within his composition of the verses, he has kept many hidden jewels for us to discover through our own *bhajana*. He has revealed only as much as necessary to help us in our *līlā-smaraṇa*. He has kept it somewhat hidden, as these confidential secrets should remain confidential. If he revealed everything openly, there would be nothing left for our *līlā-smaraṇa*. He has given us enough clues and the rest will manifest in our heart by the power of our *bhajana*.

If we desire to have *darśana* of these *līlās* and to serve Anaṅga Mañjarī, we have to start our meditation on these pastimes. We have to beg and pray to her and her *kiṅkarīs* to grant us entry into her sacred service. Only by their mercy can we gain entry into this transcendental realm.

May all readers who aspire for *mañjarī bhāva* be delighted by reading Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā.

Prabhupād Śrīla Premgopāl Goswāmī

# 1<sup>st</sup> Wave – Śakti-Tattva Vicāra

(Deliberation on Śakti Tattva)

ājānu-lambita-bhujaukanakāvadātau  
 saṅkīrtanaika-pitarau kamalāyatākṣau  
 viśvambharau dvija-varau yuga-dharma-pālau  
 vande jagat-priya-karau karuṇāvatārau (1)

“I worship the incarnations of mercy (*karuna avatāras*), Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, who inaugurated the Saṅkīrtana movement, whose arms extend to Their knees, whose complexions are dazzling, whose eyes are large like lotus petals, who are the best of *brāhmaṇas*, who nourish the entire universe, who protect the *yuga-dharma*, and who are engaged in performing auspicious activities for the welfare of the whole world.” (Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, Ādi-khaṇḍa 1.1)

śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya jaya, jaya dīna dayāmaya  
 tribhuvane dilā harināma  
 svarūpa śrī nityānanda, parama ānanda kanda  
 dui prabhura caraṇe praṇāma (2)

“All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, all glories to He, who is most compassionate to the fallen *jīvas*, and who distributed Harināma to the three worlds. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda, who is the roof of *ānanda* (bliss). I offer my obeisances to Their lotus feet.”

śrī caitanya śacī-suta, pūrve yaśodāra puta  
 rohiṇī nandana Balarāma  
 dui prabhu avatari, pāriṣada saṅge kori  
 sarva jīve koilā *prema* dāna (3)

“Śrī Caitanya, the son of mother Śacī, was previously the son of Mother Yaśodā, and Nityānanda was Mother Rohiṇī’s son Balarāma. These two Lords have now descended with Their eternal associates to distribute *prema* to all the living entities.”

śrī advaita sītānātha, sarva parikara sātha  
 caitanyaera premera bhāṇḍārī  
 acyuta ānanda pitā, *prema* bhakti phaladātā  
 tāhāra caraṇa namaskari (4)

“Śrī Advaita, the husband of Sītā Devī, along with all his associates, are the storehouse of Caitanya *prema*. He is the father of Acyutānanda and He bestows the fruit of *prema* bhakti. I offer my obeisances unto His lotus feet.”

sarva avatārī dhanya, śrī nityānanda caitanya  
 agamya mahimā keva jāne  
 brahmā ādi śukoddhava, nārādādi muni sab  
 yoge yāre dekhae dheyāne (5)

“Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya are the source of all *avatāras* of the Lord. Who can understand their inconceivable glories? Brahmā, Śukadeva, Uddhava, Nārada and all the other sages meditate on Them.”<sup>1</sup>

vandibo śrī gadādhara, gaurāṅgera priyatara  
 rādhā śakti boliyā kheyāti  
 eka vapu dui bhāga, gaurāṅgete anurāga  
 tina prabhu ekai pīriti (6)

“I sing the glories of Śrī Gadādhara, who is Gaurāṅga’s dear-most, who is famous as Rādhā’s *śakti*. Like one body in two forms, he is lovingly attached to Gaurāṅga and loves the three Prabhus (Nītāi Gaur Sītānāth) equally.”

śrī guru karuṇā sindhu, patita janāra bandhu  
 parama dayālu avatāra  
 nayane añjana dilā, hṛde jñāna prakāśilā  
 vando āmi caraṇa tāhāra (7)

“Śrī Guru is the ocean of compassion, the friend of the fallen souls, and the form of the greatest mercy. By applying the ointment of divine vision on my

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<sup>1</sup> *heno prabhu śrī gaurāṅga, nityānanda kori saṅga āilena advaita ārādhane*, “The Lord, Śrī Gaurāṅga, came along with Nityānanda because of Advaita Prabhu’s worship.”



eyes, he revealed transcendental knowledge in my heart. I offer my obeisances unto his lotus feet.”

śrī vaiṣṇavaera pada-dhūli, loinu mastake tuli,  
sabe more koraho karuṇā  
tomā sabhāra kṛpā hoite, parānanda hoy cite  
manera sarva ghuce durvāsanā (8)

“I take the foot-dust of the Vaiṣṇavas on my head. May all of them be compassionate to me! By the grace of everyone, may my heart be filled with *paramānanda* (supreme bliss) by removing all impure desires from my mind.”

śrī vasu-jāhnavā pāya, puṭāñjali namra kāya  
praṇāma kori-e punaḥ punaḥ  
śrī vasu nandana vīra, sarva kalā rasadhīra  
tāra pada mastake bhūṣaṇa (9)

“I bow down with folded hands to the lotus feet of Vasudhā Mātā and Jāhnavā Mātā, offering my *praṇāms* to them again and again. I ornament my head with the lotus feet of Vīracandra, the son of Śrī Vasudhā and Nityānanda, who is an ocean of all transcendental *rasas*.”

namaḥ śrī nityānandāya jāhnavī pataye namaḥ  
namaḥ kṛṣṇa svarūpayā namāmyanaṅga mañjarīm (10)

Śrī Bhajana Candrikā<sup>2</sup>

I offer my *praṇāms* unto Śrī Nityānanda the husband of Jāhnavā.<sup>3</sup> I offer my obeisances unto Kṛṣṇa’s *svārūpa* who is known as Anaṅga Mañjarī.

vasudhā jāhnavī kāntaṁ śrī nityānandam īśvaram  
anaṅga mañjarī rūpam avadhūtaṁ namāmyaham (11)

Bhajana Candrikā

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<sup>2</sup> By Śrī Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, the *śikṣā* guru of Rāmāi Ṭhākura.

<sup>3</sup> Both Jāhnavā and Jāhnavī may be used to denote her name, but because ‘Jāhnavī’ is used as a synonym for the river Gaṅga, most *granthas* (i.e., Bhakti Ratnakar, Nityānanda Varmā Vistāra) use the name Jāhnavā for her.

“I offer my *praṇāms* unto the *avadhūta*<sup>4</sup> Śrī Nityānanda, the beloved of Vasudhā and Jāhnavā, whose female form is Anaṅga Mañjarī.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura begins the description of Anaṅga Mañjarī by offering his respects and glorification to Nityānanda Prabhu, because Śrī Nityānanda is the Mūla (root) Saṅkarṣaṇa. Every pastime of Bhagavān is arranged by Saṅkarṣaṇa-*tattva*. Svayam Bhagavān cannot perform any of his *līlās* without him. The holy Dhāma, the place where the pastimes are enacted, the attires and ornaments He wears, and even His thoughts and activities are all arranged by Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa.

In Vraja-*līlā*, He appeared as Balarāma, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa. As He is the elder brother, He could not enter where his younger brother was playing intimate pastimes with his beloved girlfriends. However, even in these pastimes, Kṛṣṇa cannot function without the support of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. For this reason, he appeared in the form of the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī's, as Anaṅga Mañjarī. In this form, Balarāma could enter everywhere, wherever Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī performing intimate *līlās* in *nikuñja-vilās*.

Balarāma *tattva* is an inconceivable *tattva*, because both the masculine and feminine forms co-exist within the same *tattva*. When we meditate on the male form, we cannot feel the presence of the female form. Similarly, when we meditate upon the female form, we cannot feel the presence of the male form. However, both the masculine and feminine aspects are present within the form of Dayāl Nitāi. This is his specialty. Just by meditating upon Him, we can realise both his male and female aspects. Whereas, in the meditation of Balarāma, who is also Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, this combination of both masculine and feminine aspects cannot be realized.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura emphasizes this point, that if we desire to attain the blessings of Anaṅga Mañjarī, then we need to focus on Dayāl Nitāi. Just by meditating on the form of Dayāl Nitāi, we get the mercy of both Balarāma and Anaṅga Mañjarī. We can realise both the male and female power in one form, as Nitāi, and we can receive blessings from both of them.

The last line of this *śloka* says, *anaṅga mañjarī rūpam avadhutaṁ*. Nityānanda is an *avadhuta-sannyasi*, and He is free to do whatever He wants. He is not only an *avadhuta*, but is also *adbhuta*, a very astonishing form.

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<sup>4</sup> ‘*Avadhūta*’ is a saintly mendicant who is transcendental to all rules, regulations, and conventions.

Sometimes we can see Him decorated with so many ornaments and fine garments and at other times, He is without anything. He is a combination of *adbhuta* and *avadhuta*.

To take shelter of His lotus feet, we have to pray to Him: “Oh Prabhu, please let me realise Your form as Nitāi, which is the combined form of Balarāma and Anaṅga Mañjarī. To enter into confidential *rāgānuga-bhajana*, we need the blessings of Anaṅga Mañjarī, so please withdraw the curtain and allow us her *darśana*.”

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura begins his description of this scripture Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā from this verse,

iṣṭadeva nityānanda, kevala ānanda kanda  
sei tanu anaṅga mañjarī  
rādhāra anuja yei, balarāma śakti sei  
guru rūpe hon adhikārī (12)

“My *iṣṭadeva*, Śrī Nityānanda, is the source of pure transcendental bliss and his other form is Anaṅga Mañjarī. She, the younger sister of Rādhā, is the female potency of Balarāma, and appears as the qualified Guru.”

### Commentary:

Our *iṣṭadeva* is Nitāicānd, and only through Him can we attain pure *kevala-bhakti* to perform internal *bhajana*; otherwise, it is impossible. *Kevala-bhakti* is *bhakti* devoid of any self-interest. If someone were to ask us: “Do you love Kṛṣṇa?” Our answer would be: “Yes, I love Kṛṣṇa!” “Why?” “I do not know why. There is no reason for this love.” There is no answer for why we love Kṛṣṇa, because there is no specific reason for this pure love. In love, there is no prescribed process. Love is a heart connection between one person and another. And how it happens, no one knows, not even Kṛṣṇa. This is *kevala-bhakti*; this *bhakti* is a higher stage or superior form of *uttama-bhakti*.

Rūpa Goswāmī has given us the definition *śloka* of *uttama-bhakti*,

anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyarṇ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam  
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanarṇ bhaktir uttama<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> “Uttamā-bhakti is not covered by jñāna, karma, yoga, or tapasya and is free from any desires other than aspiring to make Kṛṣṇa happy. It is favourable to Kṛṣṇa and performed according to His desire.” (Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.1.11)

*Uttamā-bhakti* is defined as bhakti unadulterated by *jñāna*, *yoga* or *karma*. The *sādhaka* has to offer bhakti that is favourable to Kṛṣṇa, according to Kṛṣṇa's desire. This is *uttamā-bhakti*. However, *kevala-bhakti* is even higher than *uttamā-bhakti*. In *uttamā-bhakti* there is a requirement: We have to offer our love according to Kṛṣṇa's desire. However, in *kevala-bhakti*, where our heart is connected with Kṛṣṇa's heart, we have to serve according to our own intuitions.

There are two kinds of bhakti: *tadīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti* and *madīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti*. *tadīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti* means "Kṛṣṇa, I am yours," and *madīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti* means "Kṛṣṇa, you are mine." Kṛṣṇa loves the mood of *madīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti* more than *tadīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti*.

In *madīyāta-pūrṇa-bhakti*, we have to decide how to serve Him. Kṛṣṇa will not show any desire from his side. For example, if someone loves Kṛṣṇa in the parental mood, they will have to serve him with unconditional *vātsalya-bhāva*. Just like when children are young, they do everything according to their whims and fancies without following any rules. When it is bedtime, the children may be in the mood to play. Then the parents have to exercise control to make them take rest. When Kṛṣṇa is ours, we will take responsibility for all that is necessary for his pleasure and nourishment.

In the higher level of devotion, when we are fully surrendered to him, Kṛṣṇa surrenders to us and becomes totally depended on us, like a dancing puppet in our hands. We have to decide everything for his well-being. This is *kevala-bhakti*. It is deeper than *uttamā-bhakti*.

To get pure *kevala-bhakti*, we need Nityānanda Prabhu's blessings. No one else can bestow this topmost *bhakti*. Rāmāi Ṭhākura prays to Nitāi: "O *ānanda-kāṇḍa*, you are the main root of the *ānanda* tree. Please bestow Your blessings and always remain in my mind and heart."

A confidential truth is revealed here, *rādhāra anuja yei, balarāma śakti sei*. The younger sister of Rādhārāṇī is the female form of Balarāma, and she is also Nitāi. Then the next important point is, *guru rūpe hon adhikārī*. Does this mean that Nitāicāṇḍ is Guru *tattva*? First, Rāmāi Ṭhākura says that He is *iṣṭa*, and then he says that He is Anaṅga Mañjarī. Now he says, "*guru rūpe hon adhikārī*. How can the *iṣṭa* also be the Guru? This is the astonishing truth about Nitāicāṇḍ, He is 'all in all'. He is not only the *iṣṭadeva* who bestows blessings on one to receive this topmost *kevala-bhakti*, He is also the Jagat Guru, who is showing us the path, and initiating us into *rāga-mārga-bhajana*."

Rāmāi Ṭhākura revealed the fact, that though we may have our own Guru, Nityānanda is the Jagat Guru. Our *bhajana* will only be fruitful, if we

meditate on Nityānanda Prabhu not only as our *iṣṭa*, but also as our Guru. This is the path of our *bhajāna*. We have to meditate on our Guru as Nītāi, and at the same time we have to meditate on Nītāi as Guru. However, never make the mistake of worshipping Guru as Nītāi. We have to offer the same respect, but we should not worship Guru as our *iṣṭa* by offering Tulāsi at the feet of Guru. That will be a serious offence. If we respect Sri Guru as a manifestation of the power of Nītāi, we will receive the blessings of Nītāi.

se dhanī sabhāra para, anaṅga ambuje ghara  
sarva bhakti dātā śiromaṇi  
tāhāra anugā hoile, rādhā-kṛṣṇa prema mile  
anāyāse sarva tattva jāni (13)

"Among all the *gopīs*, that *gopī* is the best who resides in the supreme abode known as Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja. She is the greatest donor of devotion. By following her guidance, one can easily attain devotion to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and very easily realise all transcendental truths."

### Commentary:

Why did Rāmāi Ṭhākura say: "Among all the girls?" What about boys? Does this mean boys are not allowed into this *kuñja*? Actually, in the transcendental world, there is no male form. It is our false ego, if we think we are male. There is only one male form and that is Kṛṣṇa and all the others are female. That is why Rāmāi Ṭhākura says that, if we want to perform *rāga-marga-bhajāna*, we must first free ourselves from this ego, that we are male. We have to give up this false ego. Otherwise, we will never be able to enter into *rāgānuga-bhajāna*. We have to identify ourselves as a teenage girl around twelve to thirteen years old.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, "Among all the young brides of Vraja, the best one is she who resides in Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*."

Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja* is not a small place. The *kuñjas* of all other *mañjarīs*, such as Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī are also considered part of Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*. Wherever Kṛṣṇa places his lotus feet, that place is Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva, which means Anaṅga Mañjarī. There is a specific place, where Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja* is situated, but all other *kuñjas* also belong to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Wherever Kṛṣṇa performs his pastimes, it will only be possible with the support of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Otherwise, he is not able to perform any of His pastimes.

Then a question arises: If the place of service of the followers of the Nityānanda-*parivar* is Anaṅga Mañjarī *kuñja*, then what about the other *paramparās*, like the Advaita *paramparā* or Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's *paramparā*? Do they also belong to Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*? Or do they belong to Rūpa Mañjarī's *kuñja*? Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has explained this in his song:

śrī-rūpa paścāte āmi rohibo bhīta hoiyā  
 donhe pūnaḥ kohibena āmā pāne cāiya  
 śrī-rūpa-*mañjarī* tabe donhā vākya śuni  
 mañjulālī dilo more ei dāśī ānī<sup>6</sup>

How does a *mañjarī* get engaged in her *sevā* to Yugala Kiśora? Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura explains this in his song: How he goes with Rūpa Mañjarī to the divine couple and smilingly they ask Rūpa: “O Rūpa, where did you get this charming girl from?” Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī will say: “Śrī Mañjulālī Mañjarī (Lokanāth Dāsa Goswāmī) sent her for your service. I first examined her by engaging her and when I found her to be very humble, soft-hearted, loving, and expert in service, I brought her here to be engaged in your *sevā*.”

So, from this song we can understand that Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura belongs to Rūpa Mañjarī's *kuñja*, but why did Rāmāi Ṭhākura say that all the girls, who belong to Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja* are the best? Does this mean that those, who belong to Rūpa Mañjarī's *kuñja* are not the best? No, he revealed an amazing truth here that all the other *kuñjas* also belong to Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*. This is because without Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa cannot perform any of his pastimes. Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja *Kuñja* is specifically her own *kuñja*, but all other *kuñjas* are also connected with her and belong to her. Therefore, all the *mañjarīs* engaged in *nikuñja-sevā* under the guidance of Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are the best. If we follow them and take

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<sup>6</sup> “Seeing me standing shyly behind Śrī Rūpa, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, with kind hearts will smilingly ask Śrī Rūpa, “Where have you brought this new maidservant from?” Hearing Their enquiry, Śrī Rūpa will answer: “Mañjuālī brought her and gave her to me. I examined her and found her to be very soft hearted and humble, therefore engaging her in Your service, I have kept her here.” Śrī Rūpa, after relating this to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, will mercifully engage Narottama Dāsa in the Divine Couple's service. (Prārthana, song 19)

shelter of these *mañjarīs*, then we will also attain pure bhakti, pure love of Kṛṣṇa.

We have to practice our *sādhana* with a proper humble mood in *anugatyā*. We have to always be in the mood of followers. We should follow our guru *mañjarī* and our Guru *mañjarī* will follow her guru *mañjarī*, etc. In this order under our superior's guidance, we will learn how to perform our *sevā*. We cannot speculate on the service mood by ourselves. This mood will begin to develop, when we take the guidance of our guru *mañjarī*. It will take time and practice, but it will come after some time. It all depends upon our strong dedication, intense desire, and *lobha*, spiritual greed. Without passionate greed, no one can achieve this perfection in the proper service mood. We have to follow our guru *mañjarī*, and our guru *mañjarī* will follow her guru *mañjarī*. This is the process.

Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has emphasised this point so many times in his writings:

mahājanera jei patha tāte habe anūrata  
pūrvāpara kariyā vicāra  
sādhana-smaraṇa-līlā ihāte nā kara helā  
kāya mane kariyā sūsāra

“The essence of *sādhana-bhakti* is to carefully consider and follow the path displayed by the previous and the present mahājanas (great saintly ācāryas). Properly use your body and mind, and do not neglect either the regulative devotional principles or remembrance of the Lord's pastimes.” (Prema Bhakti Candrikā 14)

He mentioned this for general *sādhana*, not specifically for *rāgānuga-bhajana*. We have to follow the guidance of the seniors in our *paramparā* very carefully. In every *paramparā* there is some specific *bhajana* mood. For example, those in the Nārahari *paramparā* are following a different mood. In Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's *paramparā*, their mood is something else. In every *paramparā*, we will find some special mood. We have to follow the tradition of our own *paramparā* very strictly; otherwise, the mood and the *bhāva* will be disturbed and offences might arise in our *sevā-bhāva*. Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura is cautioning us repeatedly, ‘*sādhu sāvadhan*’. We have to be very cautious about this. We have to follow under the guidance of the *mañjarīs* in our *paramparā*, then ‘*anayase sarva tattva jāni*’ – very easily we can receive blessings and realise the process of *bhajana*.

kṛṣṇasya rādhikā śaktiḥ rāmasyānaṅga mañjarī  
etāvad jñeyatā yatra tatra tiṣṭhatu me manaḥ (14)

*Bhajana Candrikā*

“Rādhikā is Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti*, and Anaṅga Mañjarī is the female form of Balarāma. May they reside in my heart where I can always hold them.”

śrī rādhā kṛṣṇera śakti, śāstra dvāre koilo bhakti  
rāma śakti anaṅga mañjarī  
kāya mano vākya dhari, bhaja tāre ḍḍha kori  
yadi cāho kiśora kiśorī (15)

“Śrī Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti*, who is worshipped according to scriptural injunctions. Balarāma’s *śakti* is Anaṅga Mañjarī. With body, mind and words, worship them with firm conviction if you wish to attain Kiśora and Kiśorī.”

#### Commentary:

Rādhikā is Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti*, and Anaṅga Mañjarī is Balarāma’s *śakti*. But Anaṅga Mañjarī, being the female aspect of Balarāma is not the same as Rādhārāṇī’s, who is Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti*. Rādhārāṇī is the *hlāḍini-śakti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and although Anaṅga Mañjarī is referred to as the *śakti* of Balarāma, it is not totally correct to consider her as the *śakti* of Balarāma. Rather, Anaṅga Mañjarī is just the female form of Balarāma. Both have equal power. Balarāma is His male form, and his female form is Anaṅga Mañjarī.

e sab sādhana bhāi, nitāi prasāde pāi  
jāhnavā caraṇe koro rati  
dehki śuni nāhi bhuli, anya pathe nāhi coli  
nija mate cāhiye pīriti (16)

“O brother! This kind of *sādhana* is only attainable by Nitāi’s grace. So, be exclusively attached to Jāhnavā’s lotus feet. Do not look anywhere else or hear anything else or forget this, if you desire this pure devotion and nothing else.”

#### Commentary:

Here, Rāmāi Ṭhākura is reminding us to never forget that without the blessings of Nitāi we cannot attain any of these realizations. We can only realise that Rādhikā is the *hlāḍini-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī is the



female aspect of Balarāma, if we practice regularly and consistently. *kāya mano vākya dhari, bhaja tāre dṛḍha kori* – if we have a desire to receive the *kṛpā* for entering this *sevā*, then we have to fix our mind on Śrī Nitāi, because the *sādhana* in *rāgānuga-bhajana* is only attainable by Nitāi’s *kṛpā*: *e sab sādhanā bhai nitāi prasāde pāi*. We must always remember this and be cautious against getting self-absorbed in the process of our *bhajana*. The path of *bhajana* is very sweet and easy when we have love in our heart, but very difficult when we have ego in our heart.

The ego that ‘I am a great Vaiṣṇava’ will keep coming from time to time to test us. Another type of ego which comes is that ‘I know everything,’ or that ‘I have great bhakti.’ Whenever these feelings arise in our hearts, immediately we should take shelter of Nitāi. We have to ask: “What is happening to me?” The only way to get rid of this ego is to take complete shelter of Nitāi. We have to be very humble in our *bhajana* path, *dehki śuni nāhi bhuli, anyā pathe nāhi colī* - we must always feel that we are very fallen and we are all servants of Nitāi. If we can keep this ‘cap’ on our ego, that we all are Nitāi *dāsa*, then only can we enter into *rāgānuga-bhajana rājya*, the kingdom of *rāgānuga-bhajana*, with the proper attitude.

We must keep firm faith while practising our *bhajana*, in order for *kevala-bhakti* (exclusive devotion) to manifest in our heart. It is the most important part of our *rāgānuga-bhajana*. *nija mate cāhiye pīriti* – we need this *kevala-bhakti*, pure love for Kṛṣṇa in *madīyata-bhāva*: “O, Kṛṣṇa You are mine, so I must take care of You.” We have to cultivate this feeling of *madīyata*. But what are we doing? We are just giving Him all the responsibility to take care of us by worshipping His Īśvara form, as Bhagavān.

If we meditate on this Bhagavān, then the cowherd boy will disappear, and in his place Kṛṣṇa’s *aiśvarya* form of Bhagavān will appear. We will not be able to exchange our love with Him. While performing *bhajana*, we should try to practice exchanging our love with Kṛṣṇa – as a *mañjarī*. However, if we give our responsibilities to Kṛṣṇa, we will never get Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa the cowherd boy who can play, talk, joke, and laugh with us on an equal level.

Rūpa Goswāmī describes the three aspects of Kṛṣṇa as follows:

hariḥ pūrṇatamaḥ pūrṇataraḥ pūrṇa iti tridhā  
śreṣṭha-madhyādibhiḥ śabdair nātye yaḥ paripāthyate

“This is stated in the dramatic literatures as ‘perfect (*pūrṇa*),’ ‘more perfect (*pūrṇatara*),’ and ‘most perfect (*pūrṇatama*).’ Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself in three ways—perfect, more perfect and most perfect.” (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.22/ Cc Madhya 20.399)

Kṛṣṇa is always perfect (*pūrṇa*). But His highest form – manifested only in Vraja – is the most perfect (*pūrṇatama*) because there He has all sixty-four qualities. All other *avatārs* of Kṛṣṇa have sixty qualities, but Kṛṣṇa has four extra qualities,

līlā premṇā priyādhikyaṁ mādhye veṇu-rūpayoḥ  
ity asādhāraṇaṁ proktaṁ govindasya catuṣṭayam

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sixty-four qualities and symptoms have been described, including *līlā-mādhurī*, *prema-mādhurī*, *veṇu-mādhurī* and *rūpa-mādhurī*. These are four extraordinary qualities that He alone possesses.” (CC, Madhya 23.84-85)

We can never see any other *līlās* as sweet, beautiful, charming, and astonishing as Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* in any other incarnation. Why does Kṛṣṇa have so many *priyas*, lovers? Because Kṛṣṇa cannot refuse anyone who fully surrenders to Him with pure love. He accepts all of them; therefore, He has so many *priyas*, and that is the sweetness of *prema*.

The third quality is the sweetness of His flute, and the fourth is the beauty of His form. We will find these extra qualities only in Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa, not in Māthureśa Kṛṣṇa or Dvārakādiśa Kṛṣṇa. Those of us, who are practising *rāgānuga-bhakti*, only want that flute-player Kṛṣṇa of Vraja as we long to hear the sweet melodies of His flute. By the blessing of the *mahā-mantra*, one day we will hear the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. When we surrender to Him with pure devotion, Kṛṣṇa cannot refuse us. He enjoys exchanging love only with a pure heart. If we desire His love then we have to yearn for the cowherd boy Kṛṣṇa and not for any Bhagavān. We have to please him by accepting full responsibility for caring and nourishing Him.

*Nijā mate cāhiye pīrit* – Kṛṣṇa is more pleased when He is bound and controlled by the *sādhaka*’s love. If we control Him by saying: “Oh, now don’t go out to play, now it’s time to sleep” and if Kṛṣṇa obeys, we should know that our *sādhana* practice is fruitful.

First of all, we must be free from the ego of being a male, a great Vaiṣṇava, or a great scholar. These egotistic thoughts will arise from our own

*bhajana* to test us, like an examination. When we pass all these tests, then *kevala-bhakti* can be attained. It will manifest in our hearts and only in this ripened stage of pure love, are we qualified to make decisions for Kṛṣṇa. Then Kṛṣṇa will surrender himself to the *sādhaka*. This is the astonishing truth about Kṛṣṇa - He likes to be controlled by the love of His devotees, even though everyone else is seeking freedom from bondage. If, for instance, a devotee wants to let Kṛṣṇa free and tells Him: “Now you can go wherever you want” – Kṛṣṇa will say: “Please don’t send me away. I have no desire to go anywhere, I want to stay with you.”

He does not even want to reside in Goloka or to be with the great yogīs. He wants to be where his pure devotees are discussing him and crying for Him. Furthermore, He reciprocates with their love and offers himself to them:

nāhaṁ vasāmi vaikunṭhe  
yogināṁ hṛdayena ca  
mad-bhaktā yatra gāyanti  
tatra tiṣṭhāmi Nārada

“O Nārada, I do not reside in Vaikunṭha nor am I in the hearts of the *yogīs*. I reside where My devotees sing about My name, form, qualities and transcendental pastimes.” (Padma Purāṇa/Nārada-bhakti-sūtra 3.37)

When *sādhakas* offer their pure love to Him, He has nothing else to offer in reciprocation with that love, other than Himself. When anyone offers a little bit of pure love to Him, He becomes very anxious about how to reciprocate with that love. Therefore, He is bound to surrender Himself to the *sādhaka*, as there is nothing else that He can offer in return. Then He will say: “Now I am your slave; you can order Me as you like. I will just follow your instructions like a blind man.” In this way, Kṛṣṇa is waiting to offer Himself to us - if we can offer Him *kevala-bhakti*.

Above all else, we must first be free from our false ego. Then we have to be free from another ego, which is even more dangerous - that of pride which arises as the result of our own *bhajana*. After we have undergone all these examinations, and when *lobha*, transcendental greed, builds up in our heart, only then will this *kevala-bhakti* manifest.

In the previous *śloka*s, Rāmāi Thākura discloses certain facts about Anaṅga Mañjarī and how one can achieve the mercy and blessings of Śrī Nitāi. Now he mentions another profound and amazing truth about this *tattva*.

goloke dvi-bhujah kṛṣṇah accid ānanda vigrahaḥ  
tat prakāśa svarūpo'yaṁ dvitīyo deha rūpakaḥ (17)

Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād

“In Goloka, Kṛṣṇa appears as the two-armed *sat-cit-ānanda-vigraha* form. Balarāma is his second manifestation, his *prakāśa svarūpa*.”

rādhā-kṛṣṇa-balarāma, aikya vastu aikya dhāma  
aiśvarya mādhyura premamaya i  
ihāte nā koro āna, mūrti bhedo tina nāma  
śāstra mate jāniho niścoy (18)

“Know for certain that Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and Balarāma are one, along with their transcendental abode, opulence, sweetness, and *prema*. Never make the mistake of separating their forms, as this is the verdict of *śāstra* for certain.”

### Commentary:

From the previous *śloka*s, we have come to know that Balarāma is Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, He is a non-different form of Kṛṣṇa, and Rādhārāṇī is the *hlāḍini-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa. Now, Rāmāi Thākura reveals another astonishing truth, that all these three forms – Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and Balarāma – are non-different; They are one and the same in truth. They are the same *tattva* with the same potency, but with different names and forms. If we go to any one of Them, we will automatically get the blessings of the other two. According to the scriptures, they are the same *tattva* with different names and forms. But, according to the rules of *rāgānuga-bhajana*, there are some instructions we must follow.

It is very important for *rāgānuga-sādhakas* to know that they should never approach Kṛṣṇa directly. We cannot attain the ultimate result, if Kṛṣṇa is without Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī. If we approach Anaṅga Mañjarī (Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa) or Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa's blessings (*kṛpā*) will be automatically attained, because He is controlled by the love of His devotees like Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. If they do not consent, then Kṛṣṇa will not even look at us. Even though He is the supreme controller, He is under the control of Rādhārāṇī.

In the second line of the *śloka* above, *tat prakāśa svarūpo'yaṁ dvitīyo deha rūpakah*, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains that Anaṅga Mañjarī, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa or Balarāma is Kṛṣṇa's main *prakāśa-svarūpa*, manifest form, and at the same time all of these three - Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, and Balarāma - are only different in name. In truth, they are *aikya vastu*, they are the same and always belong together. Thus, in one *tattva* we will discover all three aspects. Wherever we find Kṛṣṇa alone, we must know that the other two are also present, sometimes externally and sometimes internally. Wherever Kṛṣṇa is alone, it means that Rādhārāṇī is present within Him, like in *Dwārakā-līlā* and *Māthura-līlā*. This is the reason why, while roaming in Nava Vṛndāvana, when He saw His reflection in a crystal pillar, He tried to embrace His own reflection in the mood of Rādhārāṇī's. He was very amazed and thought to himself: "He is so beautiful!" At that moment, he was covered with the mood of Rādhārāṇī's, but since this place was not Vṛndāvana, the *aiśvarya* mood prevented him. He suddenly realized this and thought: "What am I doing?" Then he realised it was his own reflection and he was surprised to see that he had such incredibly sweet and enchanting beauty.

Then it dawned upon him that, "If I am attracted by my own *mādhurya*, then how much more Rādhikā relishes my beauty and sweetness?" He wanted to experience how Rādhārāṇī was relishing him and this was the principal cause of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's advent. Whenever Kṛṣṇa is present alone, we must know that Rādhārāṇī, as well as Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, are both present there. They are always together in the same place at the same time. If we go to either Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī, we will attain Kṛṣṇa. They will engage us in Kṛṣṇa's *sevā*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura declares that these are not his words, but are evidential proofs found in the scriptures, and are certainly the truth. The *śāstra*'s verdict is that, *ihāte nā koro āna, mūrti bhede tina nāma, śāstra mate jāniho niścoy* – Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and Balarāma are one, along with Their transcendental abode, opulence, sweetness, and *prema*. We should never think otherwise and separate their forms.

ataeva kohi sāra, śakti tattva suvicāra  
 śrī kṛṣṇa svarūpa nīrūpana  
 sac cid ānanda-maya, kṛṣṇera svarūpa hoy  
 trayī śakti yāte prakāṭana (19)

“After due consideration, I am revealing the highest truth of the essence of *śakti-tattva*. Thus, establishing the truth about Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s constitution of *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* (eternity, cognizance, and bliss).”

### Commentary:

Here again he explains another amazing truth about the three potencies of Kṛṣṇa. These three truths are explained in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta:

ānandāmśe hlādinī, sad-amśe sandhinī  
cid-amśe samvit, yāre jñāna kari’ māni<sup>7</sup>

There are three potencies: *sat* - eternity, *cit* - knowledge, and *ānanda* - bliss. Rāmāi Ṭhākura reveals very important and interesting connections between these three potencies and the three forms. He says that *sat* is Balarāma or Mūla Saṅkaraṣaṇa, *cit-śakti* is Kṛṣṇa Himself and *ānanda* is Rādhārāṇī. If we contemplate upon these three potencies of Kṛṣṇa, *sac-cid-ānanda*, we will find all three in one place. For this reason, in the *śāstra* Kṛṣṇa is glorified as *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. This is the astonishing fact which has never been mentioned anywhere before. From the Six Goswāmīs, we have gained the knowledge that with the help of these three potencies, Kṛṣṇa is performing all his activities. He is using a certain potency for creation, another for performing his sweet pastimes, and He takes rest through the help of his *svarūpa-śakti*. We will discuss this in more detail in the following verses.

Besides this, we have learned from different scriptures how we should approach the worship of Kṛṣṇa, as well as all the different rules, regulations and methods of worship that we have to follow. Here, Rāmāi Ṭhākura reveals the hidden truth, how we can automatically attain Kṛṣṇa through Anaṅga Mañjarī. She will take us directly to Rādhārāṇī and tell her about our devotional *lobha*, greed to serve her. When Rādhārāṇī comes to know about the sincere desires of the *sādhaka*, she will immediately accept

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<sup>7</sup> *Hlādinī* is his aspect of bliss; *sandhinī*, of eternal existence; and *samvit*, of cognizance, which is also accepted as knowledge (and in Vraja turns into *rasa*) (Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Ādi 4.62)

that *sādhaka*. No direct permission from her is necessary. Anaṅga Mañjarī or Rūpa Mañjarī, who are non-different in their positions<sup>8</sup>, will engage us.

Earlier we discussed some of the different *paramparās*. Someone may be from Rūpa Mañjarī's *paramparā* and someone may be from Anaṅga Mañjarī's *paramparā*. There is no clash or separate interest between these two leaders. They both make decisions together whenever they discover a new *mañjarī*. They are both leaders of all the *mañjarīs*. Only after they confirm the eligibility of the *mañjarīs* will they engage them; not otherwise. Every new *mañjarī* has to be approved by both these leaders. Rādhārāṇī usually prefers the choice of Anaṅga *Mañjarī* because she has the same mood as Rādhārāṇī's. Sometimes Anaṅga *Mañjarī* is sent to Kṛṣṇa directly by Rādhārāṇī to act like Her. Being the younger sister, she is similar in appearance and in mood to Rādhārāṇī's. It is always natural to give preference to the closest relatives and as she is the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī, she obviously is the closest to Yuga Kīśora.

Whatever *paramparā* we are from, we still need to get the approval from both Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī.

sat pade bolie nitya, ei se parama tattva  
baladeva kori yāre jāni  
cit jñāna pūrṇa tattva, viśuddhete pariṇata  
sei tattva kṛṣṇake vākhāni (20)

“*Sat* is the eternal supreme truth, who is known as Baladeva. *Cit* is the complete and pure knowledge that explains everything about the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

ānanda yāhāra nāma, pūrṇa sukha pūrṇa kāma  
apūrṇatā yei pade nāi  
āhlāadini tāra nāma, sarva śakti rasa-dhāma  
sei vastu rādhā boli gāi (21)

“The one, who is known as *ānanda* is the full pleasure giving potency by which Kṛṣṇa becomes completely satisfied. She is known as the *hlāadini-śakti*, which is the reservoir of all transcendental relish (*rasa*), and whose glories are sung by the name Rādhā.”

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<sup>8</sup> Not true. Anaṅga Mañjarī is a *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī* while Rūpa Mañjarī is a *mañjarī* and can be either a *nitya-sakhī*, *prāṇa-sakhī*, or *priya-sakhī*.

**Commentary:**

Who is Rādhā? She is the *hlādinī-śakti*, *pūrṇa sukha*, *pūrṇa kāma*. She is the full pleasure giving potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *pūrṇa ānanda*. Why is Rādhārāṇī known as *pūrṇa sukha*? *Sukha* means happiness. Usually, we do not describe someone as ‘happiness.’ Saying, “He is happiness” is not appropriate. But here Rāmāi Ṭhākura says that Rādhārāṇī is the full pleasure-giving potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is an impeccable truth, as she is always present with Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes she is within him, as a mood, and sometimes she is externally present separately in her feminine form. She is the non-different form of Kṛṣṇa in his moods and pastimes. Kṛṣṇa can relish complete pleasure in her presence, as well as by being her, by adopting her mood, as they are dual forms, like twin-souls. Kṛṣṇa separated his *hlādinī-śakti* from himself to taste himself in another form. To realise how powerful this *hlādinī-śakti* is, Kṛṣṇa had to appear again in the form of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He was astonished to taste his own sweetness. He had no knowledge of the power of his own *hlādinī-śakti* potency. When he realized he has such beauty, he was delighted and exclaimed: “Oh! I have such *mādhurya*, I have such sweetness! I desire to taste it, not by the *cit* potency, but in the sweetness of Radhika’s mood.”

So, he appeared as Śrīman Mahāprabhu. This is why Rādhārāṇī is not only his separate form, but is also his mood. She is the fullest expression and accomplishment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

sad amśaś ca cid amśaś ca ānandāmśas tathaiva ca  
 sad amśe svayam evāsti cid amśe vāsudevakaḥ  
 ānandāmśe ca rādhādyā hlādinī śakti sāragaḥ  
 sad ānandāmśato rāmaḥ puṁ prakṛtyātmakaḥ paraḥ (22)

*Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād*

“Kṛṣṇa has three main potencies: *sat*, *cit*, and *ānanda*. Balarāma is the embodiment of *sat*, the existential potency. Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of *cit*, the knowledge potency (transformed into *rasa* in *mādhurya*). Śrī Rādhā and Her *śaktis* are the embodiment of the pleasure-giving potency of which Rādhā is the essence. The existential potency, Balarāma, has both male and female forms.”

**Commentary:**

Rāmāi Ṭhākura elaborates more on ‘*rādhādyā*,’ which means not only Rādhārāṇī, but also other *nāyikās*, like Candrāvalī, Cītra, and Śyamā. Lalitā and Viśākhā are not on the same level as Rādhārāṇī. But Candrāvalī is



on the same level. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa promises Rādhārāṇī: “Yes, I will come to You,” but then he goes to Candrāvalī, Śyamā, or Cītra, as they are all in the same position as Rādhārāṇī, as her rivals. In this *śloka* ‘*rādhādyā*’ means not only Rādhikā but other *nāyikās* as well.

sac cit samvit yei, ānanda svarūpa sei  
tina tattva mili eka tanu  
rādhā kṛṣṇa balarāma, rasamaya rasa-dhāma  
aikya vastu rūpa bhinu bhinu (23)

“The three potencies: *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, culminate as one concept – Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and Balarāma – who are the abode of all *rasas* and are actually one, but appear in three separate forms.”

ekhone śunoho yāra, bāhya līlā avatāra  
kṛṣṇa icchā mātra prakāṣaṇa  
pumāmśete sṛṣṭi tān, kṛṣṇa vihārera sthāna  
nānā bhānti korena racana (24)

“Now hear about the incarnation of the external pastimes, the one that creates the playground for Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with different paraphernalia. All these pastimes manifest to fulfil Kṛṣṇa’s desire.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura now describes how these three potencies - *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* are present in Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and Balarāma. We will see three different personalities in three forms. But if we look within, we will find that they possess the same potency. For the external pastimes, Balarāma has manifested himself in so many other incarnations, but they are all actually expansions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is Svayaṁ Bhagavān - the Absolute Truth, not the cowherd boy, Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa.

*Pumāmśete sṛṣṭi tān, kṛṣṇa vihārera sthāna, nānā bhānti korena racana* – Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains the truth of Mūla Saṅkaraṣaṇa *tattva*. Who is Mūla Saṅkaraṣaṇa? One who creates the playground for Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. He creates not only the places of Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās*, but also the moods and suitable environment, just as Yogamāyā is the play writer of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa began his pastime of *rāsa-līlā* by taking shelter of Yogamāyā:

bhagavān api tā rātrīḥ śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ  
vīkṣya rantuṁ manaś cakre yoga-māyām upāśritāḥ

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in all six kinds of opulence, yet upon seeing those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, he turned his mind toward loving affairs. To fulfil his desire, He took shelter his Yogamāyā potency.” (SB 10.29.1)

*Upāśritāḥ* means taking shelter. Śukadeva Goswāmī described the *rāsa-līlā* to Parīkṣit Mahārāja: “O Parīkṣit, listen very carefully; although he is Bhagavān, he desired to meet all the *gopīs* and enjoy pastimes with them, so he took shelter of Yogamāyā.”

Jīva Goswāmīpāda and Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda mention in their commentaries, that Yogamāyā is creating everything: the atmosphere, the moods, and the living entities. But who is making all the arrangements behind Yogamāyā? It is Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. Without His approval, Yogamāyā does not have the authority to do anything. From behind the scene, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is supervising everything. He is creating the *uddīpana-vibhāva*, the stimulating atmosphere to arouse Kṛṣṇa’s desires. He creates the enchanting nature, with many beautiful fragrant flowers, beautiful moonlight, and the bumblebees flying together with their sweet buzzing sound. The deer and peacocks are dancing. The peahens are preening, talking, singing and dancing together. By seeing this, Kṛṣṇa gets agitated to be in the company of the *gopīs*.

Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is not only creating the places, but also fashioning all the situations to increase Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure and happiness. He decorates the *gopīs* in different ways that are suitable for every pastime. After listening to Kṛṣṇa’s flute call, the *gopīs* ran to Him hastily by leaving all their duties behind. One was serving food to the family members, but upon hearing the flute call, she just left everything and ran. Another was getting dressed and she ran to Kṛṣṇa half-dressed. While decorating herself, another *gopī*, out of the madness of hearing the flute, put foot lac on her eyes and bangles on her legs. But, why did they run in this manner? They could have decorated themselves nicely. It was the plan of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa and Yogamāyā. They made this arrangement to give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa with the decoration of the madness of divine love.

In the *rāsa-līlā-pāḍya* written by Govinda Dāsa, there is a description of the *gopīs* running together in their divine madness. They did not notice each other, nor did they look at each other. They were not

conscious that there was someone else running along with them. Thousands of *gopīs* were running towards Kṛṣṇa, but no one was looking at each other, unaware of their surroundings, as their focus was exclusively on Kṛṣṇa. They were completely unaware of their condition, whether they were naked or incompletely made up, wearing *kajal* only on one eye or with uncombed hair. This was Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa and Yogamāyā's plan, to present the *gopīs* to Kṛṣṇa in this condition. They knew that it would give Kṛṣṇa great pleasure. And this is what delights Kṛṣṇa the most: Seeing His devotees oblivious of external consciousness in the madness of their *prema* for Him.

Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) also wanted to join the *rāsa-līlā* when Kṛṣṇa played his flute. He also went there in the form of a very nicely decorated *gopī*. He arrived there first, before the other *gopīs*, very beautifully decorated. Kṛṣṇa was very surprised and just by looking at him (her), He could recognize that this was Mahādeva. He asked: "Why are you here?" Gopeśvara Mahādeva said: "You called me with your flute song." Kṛṣṇa said: "But I played the flute for My *gopīs*." Gopeśvara Mahādeva replied: "I am also a *gopī*, just look at me, am I not a *gopī*?"

Kṛṣṇa smiled and said: "No, you are not my *gopī*!" Gopeśvara Mahadeva asked: "Why am I not your *gopī*, don't I look like one?" "No! you are Śaṅkara, I know that for sure! Just wait and see the difference between you and my *gopīs*".

Soon, thousands of *gopīs* began arriving and Kṛṣṇa pointed them out to Mahādeva saying: "There they are! These are my *gopīs*!" When Mahadeva saw the *gopīs*, and the condition in which they were running towards Kṛṣṇa, he was astonished to see the kind of selfless love they had. They were running to their beloved Kṛṣṇa in a completely self-forgetful state. Kṛṣṇa, too, was waiting to see them in this condition, which gave him so much pleasure.

That is the reason why Yogamāyā and Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa fashioned the *gopīs* minds in such a way, so as to give such supreme pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is trying to fulfil Kṛṣṇa's desire to the maximum extent by creating unlimited pastime places in the Dhāma, as well as instilling the proper moods in Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates in Vraja. All the *gopīs* are empowered by Anaṅga Mañjarī to be the perfect instruments for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure.

Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa empowers Yogamāyā, or someone else like Śrī Vṛndā Devī, to make all the arrangements for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, but he is the one, who is actually coordinating all the pastimes. Without Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa would not be able to function. This is why in *rāgānuṅga-bhajana*,

Anaṅga Mañjarī is most important. Without her blessings, no one can attain this highest position as a *mañjarī*.

śrī viṣṇu brahmā rudrāś ca śrṣṭi līlādi kāraṇam  
kintvicchā baladevasya līlā nityā iti smṛtaḥ (25)

“Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are respectively the cause of the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the universe. But actually, this is simply the pastime play of Baladeva, and takes place by His desire.” (Bhajana Candrikā)

eka viṣṇu tina rūpe, sṛṣṭyādi racaye sukhe  
balarāma icchāya e sab  
saṅkarṣaṇa ādi kori, śeṣa rūpe avatāri  
dekhāilā ananta vaibhāva (26)

“The same Viṣṇu expands Himself in three different forms to facilitate the work of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. This happens by the desire of Balarāma, who incarnates in the form of Saṅkarṣaṇa and Ananta Śeṣa to show His infinite prowess.”

### Commentary:

The four different expansions of Śrī Viṣṇu, known as the *catur-vyūha*, are Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. The first expansion of Kṛṣṇa is Balarāma, whose expansion is Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma do not do anything directly, not even creation. Kṛṣṇa is busy only with His sweet *līlā* pastimes. He is not involved with external *līlās* like the demon-killing pastimes. Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa fully supports and coordinates all the internal *līlās* and at the same time executes the external pastimes, like the creation and maintenance of the universe.

daśa murti dhari rāma, pūraen kṛṣṇera kāma  
śunoho tāhāra vivaraṇa  
pādukā vasana chatra, śayyāsana yajña sutra  
mandira bahira vibhūṣaṇa (27)  
āra upādhāna rūpa, kṛṣṇe dena mahāsukha  
ei mate kṛṣṇa sevā kore  
anantera līlā yoto, kebā jāne abhimata  
kṛṣṇa saṅge sadāi vihara (28)

“Balarāma assumes ten different forms to fulfil Kṛṣṇa's desires. Please listen to a description of this: He assumes the forms of Kṛṣṇa's shoes, clothes, umbrella, bed, sacrificial thread, external decorations of His temple, and Kṛṣṇa's pillow. In this way he serves Kṛṣṇa and gives him great pleasure. Who can understand Ananta's unlimited pastimes, as He constantly enjoys with Kṛṣṇa?"

### Commentary:

Now, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains more about Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, how he pleases Kṛṣṇa. *daśa murti dhari rāma* means Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa assumes ten forms to please Kṛṣṇa. He mentions only ten forms here but there are more than ten forms. Actually, he pleases Kṛṣṇa with countless forms.

In the form of *pādukā*, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is the shoes of Kṛṣṇa. He is Kṛṣṇa's clothes - *vasana*. Just imagine, if we take away Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa would be naked. Then what would be His condition? He is Kṛṣṇa's umbrella – *chatra*. Bedding – *śayyāsana*. Sacrificial thread - *yajña sutra*. And all the external decorations of His temple. Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is also the temple's door. There is a rule in performing *āratī* that after offering the *āratī* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, we have to offer the *ghee* lamp first to the door and then to the other devotees. If we close the door, which is Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will not be able to enter the temple. *Āra upādhāna rūpa* - means a pillow. He is also serving Kṛṣṇa in the form of a pillow. So, in these different forms Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa always serves and pleases Kṛṣṇa.

*anantera līlā yoto, kebā jāne abhimata kṛṣṇa saṅge sadāi vihara* – who can imagine the glories of Ananta's *līlās*, as he always stays with Kṛṣṇa? Ananta means unlimited. We will never be able to see the end of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, as he is infinite. He is Ananta, and He supports Kṛṣṇa by His form of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa.

It is mentioned in the Śrī Īsopaniṣad,

īśāvāsyam idam sarvaṁ  
yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat  
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā  
mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> “The Supreme Lord is the controller, proprietor, and enjoyer of all that is, of every animate and inanimate entity throughout the creation. One should accept for himself only what the Lord has given him as his share, and never try to take

Everything, moving and non-moving, is pervaded by Kṛṣṇa. He also encompasses everything, and that is why he is known as *brāhmaṇodhara*. *Udhara* means stomach, which means that everything, the whole creation, is inside him. However, this is not directly done by Kṛṣṇa, but by his expansion of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa.

In this way, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is always pleasing Kṛṣṇa. He manifested himself as Anaṅga Mañjarī for this purpose. Before explaining about Anaṅga Mañjarī, Rāmāi Ṭhākura is describing all the functions and duties of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. How he is serving and protecting Kṛṣṇa and how powerful and important his role is to Kṛṣṇa in every respect. Only then can we understand the potency of Anaṅga Mañjarī. That is why Rāmāi Ṭhākura has taken the trouble to explain the details about the *pādukā*, *chatra* and *upādhāna*. He wants to make it clear that Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is everything. Without Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa is nothing. He cannot even bless us, because the storekeeper of his *kṛpā* is Balarāma. If Kṛṣṇa wants to give *prema* to a devotee, he has to first ask Balarāma's permission. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is explaining every detail of Balarāma's *tattva* to give us proper knowledge (proper *siddhāntic* understanding) of the importance of his female form, Anaṅga Mañjarī.

līlā dvidhā-rūpā bāhyā antaraṅgā ca nityataḥ  
bāhye tu bahu-rūpāṇi cāntari gūḍha-rūpakāḥ (29)

“There are two kinds of eternal pastimes, external and internal. The external pastimes appear in innumerable forms. The internal pastimes are highly confidential (*gūḍha*).” (Bhajana Candrikā)

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura describes Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. He has divided them into two kinds; one is *antaraṅgā*, the internal, and the other is *bahiraṅgā*, the external. To manifest all these *līlās*, he has to create different suitable forms and moods. The external *līlās* are those which establish the *yuga-dharma*. like the killing of the demons.

The protection of the devotees also has two aspects. As his external duty, Kṛṣṇa is protecting some devotees from demons or their enemies, while

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another's property.” (*īśāvāsyaṃ idaṁ sarvaṃ* also means that every object throughout the universe is an instrument for serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa). (Śrī Īsopaniṣad 1)

as his internal duty, he is protecting exclusive devotees, who are attached to him with the special mood of *kevala-bhakti*. These devotees worship him not for getting *mukti* or *bhukti*, but to serve him in spontaneous love, as a *rāgānuga-bhakta*.

All the *līlās* in Vraja like his *bālya-līlā*, his playing with his friends Sudāmā, Śrīdāmā etc., and his pastimes with the *gopīs*, are part of his internal *līlās*. For these *līlās*, Kṛṣṇa has to use his own *svarūpa-śakti*. As for the external *līlās*, when he has to do something like killing demons, that is really not his true-self. It may look like Kṛṣṇa is killing the demons, but he is not performing these *līlās* with his actual form. His *aiśvarya-rūpa*, Vāsudeva is acting on his behalf. As for the pastimes with the *gopīs*, his friends, and his parents Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa has to personally perform the pastimes. No one else can exchange love with them other than him. So, Rāmāi Ṭhākura says,

bāhya dehe yei khelā, *dāśya sakhya* bālya *līlā*  
 ei sab nitya prakaṭane  
 ye ye rūpe kailā *līlā*, tina *bhāva* āsvādilā  
 ebe tāra kohi vivaraṇe (30)

"His external pastimes in *dāśya*, *sakhya*, and his childhood pastimes are all eternal *līlās* enacted with his eternal associates. In whichever form he performs these pastimes, he relishes them in three different moods."

### Commentary:

*Nitya* means eternal. The *dāśya*, *sakhya* and *bālya* are all eternal *līlās*. All the intimate associates of Kṛṣṇa are also eternal. A question may arise whether Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā are *jīva-tattva*. No, they are all eternal associates.

Śukadeva Goswāmī explained this *bālya-līlā* very sweetly: "Oh Parīkṣit! Here you can see that Kṛṣṇa has no power to do anything by himself. Even to turn over on his side while sleeping, he has to wait for his mother to turn him over." Then he explained so many sweet pastimes of the *bālya-līlā*. Parīkṣit Mahārāja was surprised and asked Śukadeva Goswāmī: "Oh Munivāra, what is happening with Kṛṣṇa? Why is he acting like this?" Śukadeva Muni replied, "No, Parīkṣit, he is not acting, he is just going with the flow of his exclusive devotees' devotional feelings."

Then Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked: "Which austerities did Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā perform to get this great *krpā* from Kṛṣṇa? They must have

received some boon from him to beget him as a child. What did they do to get Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary cowherd boy?”

Śukadeva Goswāmī was a little disappointed with this question. He replied: “Parīkṣit, you are asking about their austerities? Can you tell me what austerities did Kṛṣṇa perform by which he got such parents?”

Parīkṣit was surprised to hear this question. He asked: “Did Kṛṣṇa perform any austerities to get such parents?”

“Yes! It was his great desire to taste parental love such as this. He asked his very intimate devotees, including Devarṣi Nārada, for this *vātsalya-prema*. All of them refused, saying that it was not possible.” When Kṛṣṇa asked them: “Why is it not possible?” They all replied: “You are the father and mother of the whole universe and there is no one qualified enough to be your parents.” So, Kṛṣṇa manifested Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā as parents to play that role and they are always his eternal associates.

If we are talking about austerities then yes, Drona and Dharā also performed austerities to get Bhagavān as their child. But Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā are not in this category. They are eternally the parents of Kṛṣṇa. Their role is a permanently fixed position, as they are not *jīva-tattva*. Not only Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā, but all the close associates of Kṛṣṇa in Dvāpara *līlā* are eternal associates.

In this way, Kṛṣṇa performs all the internal pastimes with all his eternal associates. Only eternal associates can participate in Kṛṣṇa *līlā*. As proof of this, there is an example in the *rāsa-līlā*. There are five kinds of *gopīs* in *rāsa-līlā*: *vraja-vadhūs*, *vraja-kanyakās* (the unmarried girls); the *ṛṣīs*, who worshipped Prabhu Rāmacandra in Treta-yuga in the mood of a beloved; the *devīs* (goddesses, who were instructed by Kṛṣṇa and Brahmā to appear in Vraja as his beloveds) and the fifth group is the *śrutis*, the personified Vedas. The *vraja-vadhūs*, *vraja-kanyakās*, *devīs*, and *śrutis* entered *rāsa-līlā* directly. But the *ṛṣīs* were not allowed to enter directly.

In the Padyāvali *kīrtana* of *rāsa-līlā*, it is mentioned that when Kṛṣṇa played His flute to invite all the *gopīs* for *rāsa-līlā*, those *gopīs*, who were *ṛṣīs* born in Vraja as cowherd girls, were prevented by their husbands from going. So, they gave up their bodies and ran to Kṛṣṇa in their *sukṣma-svarūpa* – subtle bodies. When they arrived at the *rāsa-līlā* in their subtle bodies, they were stopped from entering the *rāsa-līlā*. Because the subtle form is an *upādhi*, a designation of the *jīvātmā*, *jīva-tattva*, they were prevented from joining the *rāsa-līlā*. For this reason, we can consider ourselves very fortunate to be under the shelter of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Nītai, as they are not considering who is eternal or who is mortal. They mercifully



distributed the *mahā-mantra* to everyone and begged everyone to chant. Unlike Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa performed his pastimes only with his eternal, intimate associates.

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura says:

sat pada cit pade mile, puṁ svarūpe kutūhole  
tāte ye ye *līlā* praçāra  
kaumārete bālya rasa, hoilā mātā pitā vaśa b  
bālya rasa bhuñjena apāra (31)

“When the *sat* (existential) potency meets with the *cit* (cognitive) potency, He delights in performing pastimes in a male form. In His childhood, he unlimitedly relishes the mellows of *bālya rasa*, child play, under the control of his mother and father, and is fully engrossed in childhood play, in a state of self- forgetfulness.”

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura is explaining how Kṛṣṇa is enacting his pastimes in complete self-forgetfulness. While performing any *līlā*, he is fully engrossed in that pastime. He is Svayam Bhagavān, who is *sarvajña*, all knowing. He knows the past, present and future. He is omnipresent and omniscient, and yet he behaves as if he knows nothing. In his *bālya līlā*, he is helpless, like a normal child. During Dāmodara-*bandhana-līlā*, as soon as he opened His eyes, he was searching for his mother. Svayam Bhagavān asked, "Where is my mother?" The truth is that, in the *līlā* he is oblivious to the fact that he is Bhagavān. He is truly the little cowherd boy, Yaśodā - nandana and Nada-nandana. This is his inconceivable power as the Supreme Lord to display forgetfulness while he is enacting his Vraja pastimes.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmīpāda gave the example of sugarcane. Sugarcane is full of sweet juice, but it cannot give the sweetness of its juice. If you ask the sugarcane to give you some of its juice, it will say, "No, I cannot. I if you want to taste my juice, you have to make some effort to squeeze it out from me. There is a process. First, you have to break me and remove my skin. Then, you have to bite and chew me, and suck out my juice. Then, you can taste me." Kṛṣṇa's *prema* is also like this. If we want to taste it, we have to make an effort by following a certain prescribed process. Kṛṣṇa will not do anything from his side. His nature is to hide his *prema*.

kṛṣṇa yadi chuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā  
kabhu prema-bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

“If anyone wants liberation or sense enjoyment from Kṛṣṇa, he immediately delivers it, but he keeps *prema-bhakti* hidden.” (CC Ādi 8.18)

If we ask for *mukti* (liberation), or *bhukti* (material pleasures), Kṛṣṇa will give it to us very easily. But if we were to ask for *prema*, he would hesitate. He is very cunning. Before we can get *prema*, he will satisfy us by giving us liberation and all material pleasures. Yes, Kṛṣṇa is very clever, but the pure devotees are cleverer than him. They know that Kṛṣṇa will try to satisfy them with material pleasures, but the pure devotees will refuse all of these and Kṛṣṇa will be amazed to see that they are rejecting everything that he offers them.

Pure devotees have no desire to accept any gift in exchange for their *sādhana*. They do not indulge in a ‘give and take’ policy. They know that if they accept anything from Kṛṣṇa, then he will set them free without giving them what they really hanker for - His *prema*. Their only desire is to always keep Kṛṣṇa close to them. They cannot tolerate separation from Him even for a moment. Their unalloyed devotion for Kṛṣṇa makes them unique and they alone have the special ability to squeeze the sweetness out of Kṛṣṇa. The sixty-four qualities present within Kṛṣṇa will become uncovered according to the purity and surrender of the devotee. If devotees, like Nanda Bābā and Mā Yaśodā with the mood of pure *vātsalya-bhāva* were not present, we would never be able to relish such sweet pastimes of *bālyā-līlā*. In *Vṛndāvana-līlā*, if Śrīdāmā, Sudāmā, and Vasudāmā were not there, no sweet pastimes of *sakhyā-līlā* could have taken place. Only the exclusive devotion of His devotees can reveal Kṛṣṇa’s sweet qualities.

Outside of *Vṛndāvana*, Kṛṣṇa performs so many pastimes, but there is no comparison to the sweetness of *Vṛndāvana*’s *līlā*. All the pastimes outside of *Vraja* are mixed with *aiśvarya-bhāva*.

In *Dvārakā*, he is a King with his wives, which means *mādhurya-rasa* is also present there. There is *sakhyā-rasa* with his friends like Arjuna and Uddhava, *vātsalya-rasa* with Devakī and Vasudeva, and *dāsyā-rasa* is with his servants. But the kind of sweetness present in the *Vraja* pastimes cannot be found there. Devakī and Vasudeva are also Kṛṣṇa’s parents, but their parental mood is mixed with *aiśvarya* and *dāsyā-bhāva*. The friendly (fraternal) mood of Arjuna and Uddhava is of a different nature from that of Śrīdāmā, Sudāmā, and Vasudāmā. During the *Mahābhārata* war, Kṛṣṇa was

the charioteer of Arjuna and there is the *sārathi* ritual to be observed while climbing onto the chariot. The charioteer must offer his hand to be stepped on by the passenger. Arjuna stepped on Kṛṣṇa's hand to get onto the chariot. He was able to do this, as he considered Kṛṣṇa his bosom friend. But, when Kṛṣṇa began to give the instructions of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, Arjuna's mood of friendship gradually changed, and after witnessing the *viśvarūpa* form of Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra, his mood completely changed to *dāsyā-bhāva* and he started to worship Kṛṣṇa in awe and reverence.

sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktam  
he kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti

“Oh Kṛṣṇa! I was so ignorant. I thought of you as my friend, and I have been addressing you with different names, sometimes Kṛṣṇa, and at other times Mādhava or Yādava. Now I realise that you are not a friend or parent, but you are the supreme controller of everything. You are the creator of this whole universe.” (BG 11.41)

Arjuna had given up his fraternal mood completely. By comparison, in Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa exhibited his *aiśvarya* to his cowherd friends many times, but they simply ignored it, considering it some kind of magical entertainment. Once, a forest fire broke out. The animals were crying out in distress and Kṛṣṇa's friends were scared, so they turned to Kṛṣṇa for refuge: “Oh Kṛṣṇa! What will happen to our cows? They will die in this forest fire!” Kṛṣṇa told them all to close their eyes. All his friends did so except Śrīdāmā, who was curious to see what Kṛṣṇa would do, so he kept his eyes half-open. He saw Kṛṣṇa placing the fire in the palm of his hand and swallowing the whole forest fire in one gulp. This was astonishing but Śrīdāmā was not at all perturbed by it. Later he whispered to Kṛṣṇa, “Oh Kṛṣṇa! I saw what you have done. I will tell mother Yaśodā that you swallowed fire.” For Śrīdāmā, witnessing Kṛṣṇa swallowing fire was like seeing him drink water. This is the amazing power of *vraja-prema*. If anyone with a pure heart step into Vṛndāvana, they will automatically feel a great surge of *bhāva* in their heart and mind. The mystical truth of Vṛndāvana is that it is *bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī toyam amṛtam*. The dust of Vṛndāvana is not ordinary, it is *cintāmaṇi* – wish-fulfilling gems. We are very fortunate if we can experience this feeling. The dust of Vraja is not ordinary. If we are fortunate to get the mercy of *vraja-dhūli*, the dust of Vṛndāvana, we will become free from the *aiśvarya* mood. We will be able to witness all the pastimes unfolding right

before our eyes. We will not see all these buildings and material surroundings.

Then Rāmāi Thākura says,

bālye duhe hoiyā matta, eka *bhāva* eka tattva  
ekāsane śayana bhojana  
eka kārye duhe cole, dohe eka khelā khele  
duhe toṣe pitā mātāra mana (32)

“In their *bālyā-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have the same mood, as they are both one *tattva*. They share their sitting place, eat together, sleep together, play the same games, and do everything together, thus giving great pleasure to their father and mother.”

### Commentary:

*Duhe toṣe pitā mātāra mana - duhe* means two, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. In their *bālyā-līlā*, they are completely under the control of their parents. But are they really controlled by their parents? No! Kṛṣṇa is actually controlled by their *prema*. If we worship him with many different types of opulent paraphernalia, but without love, he will not even look at us. Everything will be useless. He is not hankering for delicious food, opulent outfits, or big temples. Rather, he is hankering for pure love, and he is completely subdued by the heart of such a loving *sādhaka*.

The tenth canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam reveals many teachings for our *bhajana* life. The *līlās* mentioned there, are like lessons for us to cultivate our worship in *rāgānuga-bhakti*. There is a teaching for us to learn from every action that Kṛṣṇa performs. There is a certain *bhāva* expressed in every *līlā*. Simply hearing and enjoying any *līlā* like a mundane story is not enough without understanding the moral of the pastime. Vraja is the university of our *bhajana* life, as all the eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa have come to play in the pastimes with him to teach us various kinds of moods and rasas. From Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā Mātā, we can get the blessings for *vātsalya-rasa*. From Śrīdāmā, Sudāmā and Vasudāmā, we get lessons for *sakhya-rasa*. From the servants, we can get the mood of *dāsyā-rasa*, and from the *vraja-vadhūs* and *vraja-kanyakās* we can realise *mādhurya-rasa*. They are like our professors at the university of Vraja, giving us the highest lessons for our *bhajana*. We students have to be very diligent, so that we can understand the lessons that they come to impart to us.

In *bālya-līlā*, *duhe toṣe pitā mātāra mana* – Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are fully surrendered to their parents, because Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā Mātā have such deep love and attachment to Kṛṣṇa. Everyone in Vraja is thinking of Kṛṣṇa's happiness. All the activities that they perform are only for Kṛṣṇa. Even when they seem to be doing something for themselves, it is also for Kṛṣṇa. They have families, but within their family relationships, Kṛṣṇa is their main focus. The children are happy to see that their parents love Kṛṣṇa even more than themselves. The parents love their children because Kṛṣṇa is happily playing with them. They love and take care of their children for Kṛṣṇa's happiness. Kṛṣṇa is the centre of their family relationships. When a *sādhaka* attains this kind of consciousness, then Kṛṣṇa will automatically surrender to such a *sādhaka*. Kṛṣṇa will allow them to control Him and give them full responsibility for taking care for him. He is always waiting for this moment - when will a pure devotee come and say, “Kṛṣṇa, you are mine! Now I will take care of you. You do not need to take care of me.” Whenever he finds such pure devotees, like Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā Mā, who offer that kind of selfless love to him, he reciprocates and surrenders himself to them.

In the initial stages of our *sādhana*, we have to follow this mood of *duhe toṣe pitā mātāra mana*. When we are practicing *vaidhī-bhakti*, we have to make great attempts to please Kṛṣṇa. We have to show our sincere dedication and devotion. When Kṛṣṇa is satisfied with our attempts and sincerity, he will begin to show his attachment and will start reciprocating. We can see this kind of example in the life of *siddha-mahātmās*, like Vamśi Dāsa Bābājī. There is also the story of Nitāi-Gaur's Piśimā of Vṛndāvana. If we hear the stories of their relationships with their deities, then we will see that this is a fact. Vamśi Dāsa Bābā worshipped Nitāi-Gaurāṅga in a parental mood. He was a *niṣkiñcana-vaiṣṇava*, but by his *sādhana* he pleased Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, and they manifested as his children. They were always demanding something as all the children do. “Oh Bābā, we want this, we want that.” Sometimes, during summer, when there was no electricity in the middle of the night, they would wake him up and say, “Oh Bābā! We are feeling hot, please fan us!” And Vamśi Dāsa Bābā would wake up and start fanning them. It was not easy for him to please them according to their whims and fancies all the time.

Once a pastime happened during the winter in month of Pauṣa. That's the season for various kinds of *pittha*, Bengali pancakes. In Mahāprabhu's *bhojan-līlā*, there is mention of the different varieties of *pittha*. So, in the winter, Gaura and Nitāi started to demand this *pittha* from Bābājī Mahārāja at midnight. They started throwing tantrums. Bābājī angrily

shouted at them, “It’s midnight! Where can I go for *pittha* in the middle of the night? I cannot fulfil your desire. Go and ask anyone of Your devotees living around here.” He went back to sleep and later, about three in the morning, an old lady came knocking on the door of Bābā’s *kutīra*. Bābā asked her what was she doing there at such a time. She replied, “Your boys came to me and asked for *pittha*, so I made this *pittha* for them. Can you please offer it to them?” Then Vamśi Dāsa Bābā once again chastised Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, “At midnight, you went to her house and asked for *pittha*?” This is a demonstration of pure love.

In Piśimā’s life also we can see a similar pastime. She worshiped Nitāi-Gaurāṅga in the mood of *vātsalya-bhāva*. Nitāi-Gaura used to behave like two naughty children, demanding food or whatever they needed. During the summer, they were complaining that it was too hot and asked her to fan them. When Piśimā got tired of fanning them, she decided to give them a cold bath to cool them down, and started pouring buckets of water on them. She asked them if they were happy and cool, and they said, “Yes.” But the following morning, when neighbours were passing by the *kutīra* of Piśimā, they saw her crying. When they asked her what was the matter, she replied, “Oh, my boys have caught a bad cold.” “Your boys got a bad cold? How is it possible?” They all knew Nitāi and Gaura were her boys. She explained, “Last night I gave them a cold shower as they were troubling me to fan them the whole night because they were unable to tolerate the heat.” “But how is it possible, Piśimā? They are wooden deities?” “No! No! Do not say they are wooden! They are just like you.” “Can you show us how you know that they have a bad cold?” Piśimā went to the deities and squeezed their nose, and showed them the mucus that came out.

*Sādhakas* can make the deities alive by their pure love. Whatever and whenever we offer anything to Kṛṣṇa, he will accept it directly if we make the offering with love. Whenever we recite the *pādyā* mantra ‘*etat pādyam śrī kṛṣṇaya nivedayāmi*’ with love, and offer some water to Kṛṣṇa’s feet, we are washing His feet directly.

This happened with the devotees Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva. Many have witnessed this happening. When they offered anything to their deities in Mithilā, Kṛṣṇa, sitting in Dwārakā, would accept everything. Whenever they offered this *pādyā* in Mithilā, all those close associates who were with Kṛṣṇa in Dwārakā, could see the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa getting soaked with water. When they offered *naivedya* (foodstuffs), Kṛṣṇa would stretch out his hands and accept it, saying, “Very nice, I am really very hungry for this preparation.” This happened not only with Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva, but

with all the *siddha-mahātmās* and also with *sādhakas*, who offer their pure love to Kṛṣṇa.

He is always searching for pure love, because he likes to please his devotees and he is always thinking of how to make them happy. At times when devotees are not able to go to him, he himself goes to those devotees. Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva desired to meet Kṛṣṇa in Dwārakā and serve Him in the same way, as they served Him in His deity form. They were so engaged in their deity *sevā*, that they kept procrastinating going to Dwārakā. They considered their deities to be Kṛṣṇa himself, so they could not leave them. When they did not come to Dwārakā as promised, Kṛṣṇa thought: “For both of them I am present in the deities so they don’t need to come to me. They can get everything from their deities. But in order not to break their promise to see me, I have to go and see them myself.”

He started his journey to Mithilā, not alone but with the company of his very dear and pure devotees, like the Sapta (seven) *ṛṣis*, Badrī, Mahārṣi Vedavyāsa, Devarṣi Nārada, Śukadeva and many others. Kṛṣṇa went to Mithilā just to please these two devotees and to directly relish their love and service.

In the beginning stage, we will have to follow ‘*duhe toṣe pitā mātāra mana*’ as *sādhakas*, because we have to follow Kṛṣṇa’s desire. But once we enter into pure *rāgānuga-bhājana* mood, then Kṛṣṇa will start to follow us.

lalita calana gati, lalita vacana ati  
lalita cāhani aṅga bhaṅgī  
lalita komala tanu, bālya candra bālya bhānu  
nava nava śīsugaṇa saṅgī (33)

"They walk in such a lovely manner, their speech is so sweet, their glance and the movements of their limbs are so enchanting. Their lovely tender bodies shine like a baby moon and baby sun in the company of all their young childhood friends."

donhe eka balavān, mūrti bhede yeno kāma  
śveta śyāmala dui tanu  
eka poṣṭā pitā mora, bālya rase sadā bhora  
eka prāṇa balabhadra kānu (34)

"Both of them possess similar strength and their beauty resembles Kāmadeva. One is white and the other blue in complexion. They are both

nurtured by the same parents and are always absorbed in childhood pastimes. Balabhadra and Kānu seem to share the same life-force.”

### Commentary:

Here, Rāmāi Tḥākura is describing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma’s very sweet forms. *Lalita calana gati, lalita vacana ati* – when a child starts to walk, it is a joyful sight. When they start to speak, their baby language is very sweet to the ears, sweeter than any other language. When they start to utter the word Mā or Bābā, their parents’ delight knows no bounds. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were performing all the activities of childhood pastimes. They were learning to walk and speak just like any other ordinary human children. This is very astonishing as the creator, who created the living entities to perform these activities, is himself performing such activities. The pure devotees are not amazed by this, because they know Kṛṣṇa can act like this to show His love and to relish the love of His devotees.

In the hands of his pure devotees, he can transform himself into a new-born helpless baby. Here in Vraja, Kṛṣṇa, who is the controller of the whole universe, cannot feed himself or go to sleep without his mother. It is very natural for Kṛṣṇa to behave like this with his pure devotees. We will not see this kind of intimate loving exchange with any of Kṛṣṇa’s other incarnations.

In *gaura-līlā* too, we can see similar activities, like Kṛṣṇa’s. In fact, Gaurāṅga is more merciful than Kṛṣṇa. Gaurāṅga is ‘*avatāra sāra, gorā avatāra*.’ He is the essence of all incarnations. All the other *avatāras*, including Kṛṣṇa, are present within him. No other *avatāra* can create this kind of loving exchange, only Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa has the ability to do so. In his *līlās*, Kṛṣṇa is trying to teach everyone in the whole universe the process of how to attain him. We have to follow the example of pure love, like that of his parents and all the other devotees in their different loving moods of dedication and surrender. He will reciprocate according to everyone’s mood of love and surrender,

ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham  
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ

“O Pārtha! In whichever way a person renders service to Me I serve him in that very same way. Everyone follows My path in all respects.” (BG 4.11)



This is his promise, and it is not just a promise, but also his real nature. *Aham bhajāmi (bhajāmy aham)* means, “Not only are my devotees are worshiping me, but I am also worshiping them. I yearn to be in the company of those devotees who have that kind of devotion, *kevala-prema*, for me.”<sup>10</sup>

In the previous *śloka*s, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has been gradually unfolding the confidential oneness of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and the reasons why Anaṅga Mañjarī is so important for our *bhajana* in the conjugal pastimes. He will now explain more about other *līlās* with selected quotes from Viṣṇu Purāṇa and Harivaṁśa Purāṇa. Many interesting points are mentioned in these quotes.

tāvanyonya gatau bālau bālyād evaikatām gatau  
 eka mūrta dharau kāntau bāla candrārka varcasau (35)  
 eka nirmāṇa nirmuktāv eka yānāsanāśanau  
 eka veśa dharāvekaṁ puṣyamāṇau śīśu vartam (36)  
 eka kār्याntara gatāv eka dehau dvidhā kṛtau  
 eka caryau mahā vīryāv ekasya śīśutām gatau (37)

“In their childhood pastimes, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were like one personality in two different forms. Their activities were the same. They exhibited the splendour of boyish sun and moon. They lived in the same house, shared the same conveyance, shared the same seat, ate the same food, wore the same type of clothes, and were maintained as one child. They performed the same activities with two separate bodies and exhibited the same prowess.” (Harivaṁśa Purāṇa Toṣaṇī (10.8.25), Viṣṇu parva 7.2-4)

### Commentary:

When they used to go to the forest with the calves and their friends, they followed a certain style. The calves would be at the forefront, followed by all the friends and then Balarāma, and last, behind everyone would be Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is stated in Veṇu-Gītā,

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<sup>10</sup> *premā haite kṛṣṇa haya nija bhakta-vaśa/premā haite pāya kṛṣṇera sevā-sukha-rasa* – Through prema Kṛṣṇa becomes controlled by His devotees and through prema the devotees relish the blissful taste of Kṛṣṇa’s service. (CC Ādi 7.145)

akṣaṇvatām phalam idaṁ na paraṁ vidāmaḥ  
 sakhyah paśūn anaviveśayator vayasyaiḥ  
 vaktraṁ vrajeśa-sutayor anuveṇu-juṣṭam  
 yair vā nipītam anurakta-kaṭākṣa-mokṣam

“The *gopīs* began to speak among themselves: ‘O *sakhīs*! We think that for those who have eyes, there is no greater object of vision. Success of the eyes lies in beholding this object alone; we know of no other. It is the vision of the two sons of Mahārāja Nanda, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, accompanied by the *gopas*, as They enter the forest taking the cows, or as They bring them back to Vṛndāvana. They hold Their flutes to Their lips and look upon us with mild smiles and amorous sidelong glances filled with love. At that time, we drink the sweetness of Their faces.” (SB 10.21.7)

The *vraja-gopīs* sitting in their homes meditating upon the scenario of the cowherd boys going to the forest with their calves, expressed their feelings to each other, “Oh, this is the perfection of our vision; our eyes have become successful just by taking His *darśana*.” Here the *gopīs* did not mention the name of Kṛṣṇa directly, because they were too shy to mention His name out of their immense love. Whenever they mentioned the name of Kṛṣṇa, they would be overwhelmed with love and they would faint. For this reason, they never directly mentioned the name of Kṛṣṇa. They would say, “Look at the son of Nanda Mahārāja, to have *darśana* of Vrajeśa is the goal of our vision!”

*Vaktraṁ vrajeśa-sutayor anuveṇu-juṣṭam* – whoever can become immersed in the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the flute player, for them it will be the highest achievement of their eyes. They also compare Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with the lustre of the sun and moon. Who are the sun and the moon here? They are both similar in their prowess and effulgence, so how to differentiate them, as who is the sun and who is the moon? Baladeva's effulgence is like the moon, but what about Kṛṣṇa? Actually, both of them are equally referred to as the sun and the moon. It is mentioned here that They are like a young sun and moon: *bāla-candrārka-varcasau*; *eka nirmāṇa* – They are from the same place; *nirmukta* – They are care-free; *eka yānāsanāśanau* – they are using the same cart and sitting together on the same *āsana*. They share and eat together the same food they bring along packed by Yaśodā Mātā or Rohini Mātā. They place the food on one plate and take turns to feed each other. *Eka veśa dharāvekaṁ puṣyamāṇau śīśu vartam* – Their life during their childhood was maintained in the same manner. So, in this way, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has explained their oneness.

ebe śunu kōhi āra, paugaṇḍera paracāra  
 sakhā saṅge koilā ye ye līlā  
 dāśya sakhya spaṣṭa rasa, vātsalyera ābhāsa  
 bud ha jane śāstre prakāśilā (38)

"Please listen as I tell you more about Their *paugaṇḍa-līlā*. During the pastimes enacted at that time, their relationship developed in the moods of *dāśya* and *sakhya*, and sometimes a semblance of *vātsalya-bhāva* as well. These were revealed by the great saints in the scriptures."

### Commentary:

When they were in their *paugaṇḍa-līlā*, which is right after the *bālyā-līlā*, their relationship developed into friendship, which was more than just that of brothers. They played together with all their friends, but at the same time in the *dāśya* mood, they offered their service to each other. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa served Balarāma and sometimes Balarāma served Kṛṣṇa.

sakhya bhāve dohe sama, dāśye dāśya dohoṇpama  
 dohe doha guru-bhāva kore  
 doha māthāmāthi raṇa, dohe seve doha jana  
 ei mata dohete vihara (39)

"In the mood of friendship, they were both equals. They respected each other as gurus, as they considered each other to be their superior. They wrestled head-to-head and served each other. In this way they relished each other's company in their childhood pastimes."

### Commentary:

*Dohe doha guru-bhāva kore* – They are thinking of each other as superior like a guru. They are both at the same level in their potency and they are demonstrating this by accepting each other as guru. Balarāma sees Kṛṣṇa, as his Guru and Kṛṣṇa sees Balarāma as his Guru. If we were to make a comparison of which one of them is greater, we would be committing a great offense.

The scriptures have declared that not only Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are non-different, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā is also on the same platform – *aikya vastu aikya dhāma*. When one of them is present, then we must understand the other two are also present there. Whether externally or internally, they are

always together. So, we must be very cautious to never see any difference in their position or potency.

In Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, it is mentioned that we should never make any comparison between devotees, what to speak of different forms of Bhagavān. In the ten offenses against the *mahā-mantra*, it is clearly stated that one should not distinguish between Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu. It is a grave offense, as both are *īśvara-tattva*. There is a serious misconception regarding the position of Lord Śiva – whether he is *īśvara-tattva* or not – and much confusion resulting from that. Some argue that, “How can Lord Śiva be considered *īśvara-tattva* if he is always meditating on Kṛṣṇa and serving Kṛṣṇa? How then is it possible to see them in the same category and consider them non-different?”

Jīva Goswāmīpāda has clarified this misconception by clearly stating that both Kṛṣṇa and Śiva are *īśvara-tattva*. Lord Viṣṇu is *īśvara* in the form of *iṣṭa* (*sevyā* Bhagavān) and Lord Śiva is *īśvara* the form of a devotee (*sevā ka* Bhagavān). By mood, *bhakta* and Bhagavān are always together; they are the same truth in two different forms. If the devotee is taken away from Bhagavān, then Bhagavān becomes impersonal, and if Bhagavān is taken away from the devotee, the devotee become completely zero. Therefore, they must always be together and are considered inseparable.

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura once again reveals a higher truth about *sat-cit-ānanda*, the three potencies of the Lord. Balarāma-*tattva* is known as the *sat* potency, the *cit* potency is Kṛṣṇa and the *ānanda* potency is Rādhārāṇī. Therefore, they are non-different and eternally together. With evidential proof from *śloka*s found in Harivaṁśa Purāṇa, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has confirmed that although They have two forms, their activities are the same.

Later on, Rāmāi Ṭhākura will explain the confidential truth, that Anaṅga Mañjarī is also a non-different form of Kṛṣṇa. That is why it is very important, that we go to Anaṅga Mañjarī to get knowledge about Kṛṣṇa *sevā*. Only by her guidance, can we enter into the confidential, *nikuñja-līlā* pastimes. Without her blessings, no one can attain that stage. If we have the desire to get this confidential service, we need to first realise this truth (*tattva*) about the position of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. We need to realise that they are non-different and their position and potency are the same. For this reason, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has given us such elaborate explanations about the oneness of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma – before he starts explaining about Anaṅga Mañjarī *tattva*.

Coming back to the verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has written *dohe doha guru-bhāva kore*. Emphasizing this point of *guru-bhāva kore*, he could have

just said that they are respecting each other, but why did he use the word ‘guru’? Guru is the one who guides us to destroy our false ego and purify our minds and moods. In what way does the term ‘guru’ apply in Their relationship?

Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains how Kṛṣṇa has to always control Balarāma in the latter’s service of distributing *prema*. Balarāma is known as *prema-mūrti*, the storehouse of *prema*. Kṛṣṇa needs him to perform this *sevā* of distributing *prema*, but Balarāma has a ‘weakness’ that he never considers one’s qualifications, who is higher or lower, who is respecting him or not, and who is chastising him or loving him. He is not considering one’s eligibility, nor does he need anything from anyone. He is always acting according to his own mood of *prema*. He only sees the good in everyone and is always eager to distribute *prema*. To stop him, Kṛṣṇa has to control him. In this respect, Kṛṣṇa is acting like Balarāma’s guru.

When Kṛṣṇa performs pastimes with *gopīs*, he needs Balarāma to give him *prema*, as he is the keeper of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. He needs guidance from Balarāma. All the various moods and the different *prema-bhāva-līlās*, enacted by Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* are beautifully arranged by Balarāma. Sometimes, he creates obstacles in the *līlās* to increase their intensity and make them sweeter. If there were no obstacles in the *līlās*, they would not be very relishable and sweet. They would then be the same as the *līlās* in Goloka Vṛndāvana, where the only *līlā* is the *rāsa-līlā*. There is only *svakīya bhāva* in Goloka Vṛndāvana and no obstacles to Kṛṣṇa’s meeting with Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*.<sup>11</sup> That is why Baladeva Candra, who is the pleasure-giver of Kṛṣṇa, has to control everything and arranges all the *līlās* in a suitable way. He creates all the places, the appropriate moods, and the proper environment for the *līlās*. So, that makes him the Guru of Kṛṣṇa. This explains how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are gurus for each other.

Sometimes they fight ‘head-to-head’ like wrestlers and sometimes they play happily together, and when they are exhausted after playing, they serve each other. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa serves Balarāma when Balarāma is tired, massaging His feet while the other boys fan him. This is just one of Balarāma’s tricks. Why does he feel tired and go to sleep, when they are in the forest? Is he really tired and needs to take rest? On the pretext of falling asleep, he creates the opportunity for Kṛṣṇa to meet Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī will wait with all her *sakhīs* in a *kuñja*, close to where Kṛṣṇa is herding the

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<sup>11</sup> This is the *svakīya-bhāva* view of Jīva Goswāmī, but Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura strongly disputes this view and proves *parakīya* is also there in Goloka.

cows. Balarāma allows Kṛṣṇa to massage his feet and after a short while he pretends to be in deep sleep and starts snoring.

Kṛṣṇa thinks, “Now that my brother is deeply asleep, it’s good time go.” He asks his friends to take care of Balarāma, while the latter is ‘sleeping.’ Balarāma knows what’s going on because he is the one who is arranging everything. He knows that out of shyness, Kṛṣṇa will not leave in his presence, so he pretends to be asleep.

In an indirect way he is telling Kṛṣṇa, “You can go now because Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is waiting for you.” Until Kṛṣṇa returns from his pastimes with Rādhārāṇī, Balarāma pretends to be asleep, although he is not really sleeping. He knows everything that is happening, because he is also present there in the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī. He knows for how long he has to continue his pretend ‘sleeping’ and he will only get up when Kṛṣṇa returns.

[The following *śloka* consists of two separate lines from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam,]

vṛṣāyamāṇau nardantau yuyudhāte parasparam  
svayaṁ viśrāmyatyāryaṁ pāda samvāhanādibhiḥ (40a)

“They dance together and play-fight with each other like bulls. Kṛṣṇa personally makes his elder brother recline and then renders him services like massaging his feet.” (SB 10.11.40 & 10.15.14)

### Commentary:

Kṛṣṇa performs all His internal *līlās* like the *bālyā-līlā*, *vātsalya-līlā* and *mādhurya-līlā* with the help of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, whereas all his external activities are performed through the assistance of Vāsudeva. This is why he respects Balarāma as Guru. There are so many evidential proofs from the scriptures revealing the truth that Balarāma is Kṛṣṇa’s direct expansion and non-different from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa’s *catur-vyūha*, his four-armed forms, like Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha also expand from Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. Even though some scriptures mention that Balarāma is a part of Kṛṣṇa, most scriptures declare that Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa and Kṛṣṇa are non-different. They are one *tattva*, and only for the sake of *līlās* they manifest in two different forms. They have the same interests and perform the same activities, but in different forms. Rāmāi Ṭhākura has quoted *ślokas* from the scriptures to prove this point.

svayaṁ viśrāmayatyāryaṁ, baladeva guru-*bhāva*  
 anurāge kṛṣṇa kore *sevā*  
 baladeva mahāśaya, āpani kṛṣṇa sevaya  
 dohe tattva durjñeya jānibā (40b)

“Kṛṣṇa lovingly serves Baladeva as his guru. Baladeva also personally serves Kṛṣṇa (as his guru). Their *tattva* is inconceivable.”

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains the service of Balarāma. First, he explained how Kṛṣṇa serves Balarāma and now he explains Balarāma’s *sevā*. *Anurāge kṛṣṇa kore sevā*, Balarāma is serving Kṛṣṇa with deep love. When he serves Kṛṣṇa, he is also honouring him with the same respect as his guru. *Baladeva mahāśaya, āpani kṛṣṇa sevaya*, he personally serves Kṛṣṇa in various ways. When they perform their *sakhya-līlā*, Balarāma serves him by massaging his feet when Kṛṣṇa becomes tired. Sometimes he serves Kṛṣṇa by feeding him when he forgets to take his food. Sometimes he controls Kṛṣṇa. There are so many *līlās* where the demons are killed by Balarāma. Whenever Balarāma is present, he is always the first one to confront and kill the demons before Kṛṣṇa does so, as he is very protective of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes they fight with the demons together and kill them. In this way, Balarāma maintains his position as an elder brother protecting his younger brother, and at the same time serving Kṛṣṇa as his Guru.

He controls all the activities of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. Balarāma knows when and where Kṛṣṇa is supposed to meet Rādhārāṇī, because he makes all the arrangements along with Yogamāyā. When Kṛṣṇa becomes too tired after playing with His *sakhās*, Balarāma gets very anxious that Kṛṣṇa will not be able to please Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs*. So, he forces Kṛṣṇa to take rest. While Kṛṣṇa is resting and watching other *sakhās* playing, Balarāma affectionately feeds Kṛṣṇa with the *laddūs* and *khīra* that Yaśodā Mātā prepared for them.

It is such a beautiful scene to watch Balarāma feeding Kṛṣṇa, while Kṛṣṇa is watching the play of his other cowherd friends. This is in *dāsyā* mood, service to guru. They have great respect for each other and are very deeply attached to each other. This is why we have to approach Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa first before approaching Kṛṣṇa. If we get the blessings of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, we can realise the truth about Kṛṣṇa. When we get the blessings of Kṛṣṇa, we can realise the truths about Balarāma. No one else can explain their *tattva*, only they can reveal each other’s *tattva*. Balarāma in the *svarūpa*

of Anaṅga Mañjarī can explain the truth about Rādhārāṇī, which even Kṛṣṇa cannot do. Until now, Kṛṣṇa is still trying to realise the loving mood of Rādhārāṇī. These *līlās* are *nitya* and are happening eternally, and Kṛṣṇa is still trying to discover the depth of Rādhārāṇī's sweet *prema* for him. But, if we take the shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī, then she can explain Rādhārāṇī's mood. Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa knows everything about Kṛṣṇa *tattva* and only he can explain Kṛṣṇa *tattva*.

In Navadvīpa *līlā*, it is the same. Only by the blessings of Nityānanda, can we realise the truth about Mahāprabhu. After getting the full blessings of Mahāprabhu, then we can understand Nityānanda *tattva*. We can only attain the realisation of Nityānanda *tattva* directly from Śrīman Mahāprabhu. No one else can explain it. Nityānanda *tattva* is very deep and confidential; it is beyond our intelligence.<sup>12</sup> Only the pure *bhaktas*, the *kevala-prema-sādhakas*, can realise this truth.

So, before we can enter into *rāgānuga-bhajana*, we must first realise the fact, that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are non-different. Next, we must be firmly established in the knowledge that Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, and Anaṅga Mañjarī are simultaneously one and different – *acintya bhedābheda tattva*. They are always in the same place, with the same mood, performing the same activities, but with different names and forms.

Now we are very close to finishing the Prathama Taraṅga, the first wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā. In the previous verses, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explained in detail the oneness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. He further explained that Rādhikā's potency is the same as Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's. He repeatedly emphasized the fact that all three of them have the same function in all their internal and external activities and duties. In this last part of the first wave, he explains this verse from Stavāvalī:

udyaḥ chrubrāṁśu-koti-dyuti-nikara  
tiraskāra-kāryujjvala śrīr  
durvāroddama dhāma prakara ripu  
ghatonmāda vidhvaṁsi gandhaḥ

<sup>12</sup> **ati gūḍha nityānanda ei avatāre caitanya dekhāya yāre, se' janite pāre**

"In this incarnation, Śrī Nityānanda is deeply confidential. One can know Him only when Śrī Caitanya reveals Him. (Nityānanda *tattva* is very confidential and one can realise it only by Śrī Caitanya's mercy)." (Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya-khanda 3.171)



snehād apy unnimeṣaṁ nijam anujam  
 ito 'raṇya-bhūmau sva-vītam  
 tad vīryajño'pi yon a kṣaṇam apanayate  
 staumi taṁ dhenukārim (41)

“I praise Baladeva Prabhu, the enemy of Dhenukāsura, who is always serving Kṛṣṇa with *prema*. Out of his great affection, he does not leave his little brother Kṛṣṇa out of his sight for even a moment. The brightness of millions of rising moons has no comparison to Baladeva Candra's effulgence. I am offering my praise to that Baladeva Candra, without whose mercy and blessings, one will never be able to attain Kṛṣṇa.” (Stavavālī, Vraja-Vilāsa Stava 12)

### Commentary:

In *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, we can see that Kṛṣṇa is always glorifying Balarāma and giving importance to His elder brother. They know the truth about each other. Even though Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is not Svayam Bhagavān, by potency they are the same. Kṛṣṇa gives the same importance to Balarāma, because without him, Kṛṣṇa is helpless. We can see in the scriptures that even Śukadeva Goswāmī, who has described Kṛṣṇa *līlā*, has given great importance to Balarāma.

First of all, we must know who actually narrated the Bhāgavatam for us. It was not Śukadeva Goswāmī, but Śrīla Sūtadeva, who was the son of Romaharṣaṇa. While Balarāma was on holy pilgrimage, He came to the holy forest of Naimiṣāranya where great sages were performing an extended sacrifice. When all the assembled sages offered a seat of honour to Him, Balarāma noticed that Romaharṣaṇa, who was seated on the *vyāsāsana*, the speaker's seat, did not bother to offer Him *praṇāms*.

Greatly angered by Romaharṣaṇa's ego and offense, Balarāma killed him by touching him with the tip of a blade of *kuśa* grass. The assembled sages were disturbed, and they said to him, “You have killed a *brāhmaṇa*, and although you are above the Vedic injunctions, we humbly request you to set a perfect example for the general populace by atoning for this sin.” To make peace with the sages, Balarāma applied the Vedic rule that one's son is entitled to take his father's position as his own. So, he granted the seat of Romaharṣaṇa to his son Sūtadeva and placed him in his father's position, as speaker of the Bhāgavatam. Besides this, he promised the sages that they would not be deprived of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, as he is bestowing his full blessings on Sūtadeva, empowering him to be able to reveal the deeper truths about

Kṛṣṇa, so much so that he would be more qualified than his father in narrating the Bhāgavatam.

This is how we got the *kathā* of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. After hearing the conversation between Parīkṣit Maharaja and Śukadeva, Maheṣi Sūta went back to Naimiṣāraṇya and narrated this *kathā* to the *ṛṣis* in the most relishable way. This is another example of Balarāma creating a situation for the glories of Kṛṣṇa to be presented in the best way possible. Balarāma actually killed Romaharṣaṇa only as a pretext for arranging the narration of the Bhāgavatam to be spoken by someone whom he himself empowered to present it in a perfect way.

We can see from all these examples, that without taking the shelter of Balarāma, we cannot get anything from Kṛṣṇa. In the same way, if we need anything from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, we have to first approach Nitāi. This is the simplest and easiest method for the *jīvas* of Kali-yuga. Without the blessings of Nitāi, we cannot attain the *sevā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Any connection with Kṛṣṇa is possible only if it happens by his own sweet will and desire. Everything about Him is transcendental. Chanting the *mahā-mantra*, taking *darśana* of the deities, offering any kind of service to Kṛṣṇa, travelling to Kṛṣṇa's holy places of pilgrimage (like Vṛndāvana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa) – nothing is possible by our own effort alone or by our material senses.

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ  
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

“The *nāma-rūpa-guṇa-līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can never be perceived by the material senses of the conditioned soul. Only for one whose mind and senses have been purified by chanting and serving under the guidance of Śrī Guru, will Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities and pastimes become manifest. Śrī Harināma will manifest on the tongue of such a *sevonmukha-sādhaka* naturally by itself.” (Padma Purāṇa/BRS 1.2.234)

We cannot take *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa with our material eyes, and we cannot serve him with this material body. So how are we performing all these activities with our material body and senses? We are chanting the *mahā-mantra*, and we are taking *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's deity form when we go to the temple and the *tīrthas*. However, all these activities are made possible only by his sweet will. If we are able to offer any kind of service without any kind of obstacle, it means that he is accepting our service. How does this

happen? When our heart and mind are in a favourable mood to Kṛṣṇa, *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam*, then Kṛṣṇa accepts everything from us. If we feel a great longing to serve him by any process like chanting the *mahā-mantra*, taking his *darśana* in a temple, or meditating I upon him, this can only happen when the Lord's and the devotee's mind meet together. When the devotee desires, "I will feed Kṛṣṇa this *naivedya* – at the same time Kṛṣṇa also feels and responds with a similar desire, "I will accept some *naivedya* from this devotee." When their two thought-waves are parallel, then the desire that manifests in the heart of the *sādhaka* will be fruitful; no obstacles will arise. Otherwise, it would not possible.

*Dāma-bandhana-līlā*, the Dāmodara-*līlā*, is a great example of this. During the Dāmodara month, on the day of Dīpāvalī, this beautiful *dāma-bandhana-līlā* took place. Mā Yaśodā tried to tie Kṛṣṇa to a mortar to punish him. She tried so many times, but all in vain. First, she tried to bind Him with her hair tie, but it was too short. Then she tried to tie him by joining many ropes into one, but it was still too short. The rope remained two fingers' short despite her repeated attempts to join many ropes. This two fingers' gap has a special significance. Parīkṣit asked Śukadeva about this, as he was puzzled by this inexplicable two fingers' gap in the length of the rope, even though Mā Yaśodā was continuously increasing the length of the rope. Śukadeva Goswāmī explained that the two fingers signify two minds: the mind of Bhagavān and the mind of his *bhakta*. Only when the mind of Bhagavān and his *bhakta* attain unison can any service be accomplished.

Mā Yashoda had a chubby figure and was also not so young, as she conceived Kṛṣṇa at a late age. It was a great struggle for her to bind Kṛṣṇa in that condition. With all her effort, she first used her hair tie and then she joined rope after rope to the hair-tie, but the rope remained always two fingers' short, and she failed to bind Kṛṣṇa. This was because Kṛṣṇa did not have the desire to be bound, and therefore she was unsuccessful. But, when he saw his mother totally exhausted and perspiring profusely by trying to bind him, he finally accepted this *bandhana-sevā* out of his compassion and love for her. As soon as He accepted it, miraculously the small piece of string from her braid was sufficient to bind him.

To demonstrate this *līlā*, he did not have to enlarge his body. He remained in his child form and he showed this great *aiśvarya* simply by his own desire. If he does not have the desire to accept our *sevā*, then we will never be able to do anything. Rather, we will keep facing one obstacle after another.

This is where the mercy of Balarāma comes to save us. Even if Kṛṣṇa does not want to accept us, if Baladeva Candra orders him, saying: “No, you have to accept it,” then Kṛṣṇa will have no choice but to accept us. Whenever we need something from Kṛṣṇa, we have to first take shelter of Baladeva Candra. Similarly, whenever we want something from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, we have to first go to Nitāi. Without Nitāi’s *kṛpā*, we will not get Gaura’s *kṛpā*. Without Gaura’s *kṛpā*, we will never attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s *sevā*. The one and only route for us is through Nitāi. If we want to serve Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī as a *mañjarī*, we must first get the *kṛpā* of Doyāl Nitāi. This is the simplest and easiest process for the *jīvas* of Kali-yuga.

*Heno nitāi vine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi* – why does Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura say, “If you do not get the blessings of Nitāi, then you will not get Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?” Even if by their mercy Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa come to us directly, before we get the *kṛpā* of Nitāi, we should not approach them to offer our service. Because they are only searching for our *prema* and not our external activities, like offerings of opulent food and dresses. They are only searching for pure *prema*, and this *prema* can only be obtained by the *kṛpā* of Doyāl Nitāi, as He is the *prema-bhandari*, the store keeper of *prema*. Before we obtain the *kṛpā* of Nitāi, even if Rādhā-Govinda come to us, we should not accept Them. We should humbly refuse Them by explaining our position. We should tell Them: “Please, wait for some time. I need to get Nitāi’s *kṛpā* first to be qualified to offer my service to you.” That is why Rāmāi Ṭhākura has revealed all these truths about Balarāma and his importance. He showed this oneness of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Rādhārāṇī’s. Our target is to serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī. As a *mañjarī*, we have to focus our mind on Rādhārāṇī, not on Kṛṣṇa. Without the *kṛpā* of Rādhārāṇī, no one can attain the service of Kṛṣṇa. The truth is that we are the maidservants of Rādhārāṇī, not Kṛṣṇa. We are all in *rādhā-pāda-dāsyā* in our eternal form. We all are *mañjarīs*. So, we have to first get *kṛpā* from Nitāi-Balarāma and only then can we attain the *kṛpā* of Rādhārāṇī to engage in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

koti sūrya tiraskāra, yini aṅgakānti yāra  
 heno baladeva mahāśaya  
 uṣṇabhūmi kharavāta, anujete ati prīta  
 nā dekhiyā kāmpaye hṛdaya (42)

“Baladeva Mahāśaya’s bodily lustre has the effulgence of millions of rising suns. Out of his love for his younger brother, his heart is always palpitating

with *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and whenever Kṛṣṇa is not within his sight, he becomes very anxious.”

vātsalyete sneha kori, kṛṣṇe rahe mana dhari  
 kṛṣṇa yadi yāna anya sthāne  
 nimiṣete nā dekhiyā, animiṣa āṅkhi hoiyā  
 kṛṣṇa patha kore nirīkṣaṇe (43)

“Balarāma’s love for Kṛṣṇa is sometimes in *vātsalya-bhāva*, as he is constantly thinking of him. Whenever Kṛṣṇa goes elsewhere or if Balarāma does not see Kṛṣṇa even for a moment, he looks out for him desperately along the pathway without blinking.”

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura elucidates Balarāma’s love for Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma has the effulgence of millions of rising suns and He is always quivering with Kṛṣṇa *prema*. He has very deep love and attachment for His younger brother. *Anujete ati prīta nā dekhiyā kāmpaye hṛdaya* – whenever Kṛṣṇa is not within His sight, His heart starts palpitating in anxiety. Although he knows that Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān and he has all the power to do anything and everything, still, when Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappears from his sight even for a moment, he becomes very restless with anxiety and starts looking for his brother. He feels one moment of separation from Kṛṣṇa to be very long time. This is the nature of love.

Since their childhood, he had this great attachment to Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma is very protective of Kṛṣṇa, who is the protector of the whole universe. If they are confronted with any danger when they are together, Balarāma will always go first to face the enemy to protect Kṛṣṇa, as in the case of Dhenukāsura. When this demon attacked them, they were both together. All their friends ran to them and told them that Dhenukāsura had come. Balarāma immediately stopped Kṛṣṇa and went forward to kill Dhenukāsura. That is his service to Kṛṣṇa. For a servant, this mood of serving his Lord is very natural, and Balarāma is always behaving like the best of servants, who is loyal to his master. In this way, he gives great pleasure to his younger brother, and Kṛṣṇa feels his elder brother’s love and protection.

Kṛṣṇa also serves Balarāma in a similar manner. In the previous verse, we heard, *dohe doha guru-bhāva kore* – both have respect for each other as guru and serve each other. Here we can see, that Balarāma has more loving attachment towards Kṛṣṇa, because he is the deity of *prema*, *premera-ṭhākura*. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is trying to reveal these feelings of Balarāma’s very

strong loving attachment to Kṛṣṇa. *Vātsalyete sneha kori* – sometimes Balarāma has a *vātsalya* mood towards Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣṇe rahe mana dhari*, he is constantly thinking about Kṛṣṇa, and he has only one duty and activity: To serve Kṛṣṇa with all his love. *Kṛṣṇa yadi yāna anya sthāne* – if Kṛṣṇa goes away to some other place, *nimiṣete nā dekhiyā, animiṣa āṅkhi hoiyā* – and Balarāma cannot see Kṛṣṇa for even a moment, he feels great anxiety. He even stops blinking his eyes out of worry that he will miss Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa might go away. He looks out for Kṛṣṇa everywhere, *kṛṣṇa patha kore nirīkṣaṇe* – towards all the pathways that Kṛṣṇa always walks on.

bāhya dehe ei khelā, *dāsya sakhya* bālya *līlā*  
 ei sab nitya *līlā* jāni  
 ati guhya mukhya rasa, *kṛṣṇa yāhe* hon vasa  
 ānandāmśe rāmete vākhāni (44)

“All the external pastimes, whether they are conducted in the mood of *dāsya*, *sakhya* or *vātsalya-bhāva*, are eternal pastimes. These pastimes are very confidential and are full of the principal *rasas*, by which Kṛṣṇa can be subjugated. It can only be expressed within the *ānandāmśa*, the bliss potency of Balarāma.”

### Commentary:

In this verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura discloses another surprising truth about Balarāma. He says that Kṛṣṇa is taking rest in the *ānandāmśa* of Balarāma. All this while we have heard of Kṛṣṇa’s three potencies: *sat* is Balarāma, *cit* is Kṛṣṇa, and *ānanda* is Rādhārāṇī. Here, he is revealing another deeper secret that not only Rādhārāṇī but also Balarāma has that *ānandāmśa*, the bliss potency. Within that *sat* potency of Balarāma, a part of the bliss potency, *ānandāmśa*, is also present. Kṛṣṇa is always taking rest and performing all his secret pastimes with Rādhārāṇī and the *Vraja-gopīs* by this *ānandāmśa* of Balarāma. These are all *ati-guhya-mukhya-rasa*, confidential *līlās*.

Now, Rāmāi Ṭhākura comes to the close of this chapter. He offers his glorification to his *iṣṭas* and respect to all others.

mad īśvari pada bhāvi, nāmnā śrī lalitā devī  
 tāra kṛpāya ye hoy smaraṇa  
 ṛṣṭā vṛndāvana dāsa, tāra pāda-padma aśa  
 dhūli koron mastaka bhūṣaṇa (45)

“Remembering the lotus feet of my Īśvari, Śrī Lalitā Devī, and meditating on her mercy, I offer my obeisance unto the lotus feet of Vṛndāvana Dāsa and take the dust of His lotus feet upon my head.”

### Commentary:

During *niśānta-līlā*, the *mañjarīs* prepare everything, such as water, *āratī* paraphernalia, and flower garlands, and they offer it to Lalitā Devī. Lalitā Devī then offers it to Yugala Kīśora. She washes their faces, mouths, and their lotus feet with water, and then she performs *maṅgala-āratī* during *niśānta-līlā*. This is *yoga-pīṭha smaraṇa*.

The *mañjarīs* can also offer their service directly. They sometimes invite Yugala Kīśora to their *kuñjas*. Anaṅga Mañjarī, Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī sometimes invite Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to their *kuñja*. When Kṛṣṇa enters Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja *kuñja* or Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī’s *kuñja*, these *mañjarīs* themselves perform the *āratī-sevā* and they allow all the other *mañjarīs* to participate. In their own *kuñja*, they can offer this service directly to Yugala.

If we follow the process prescribed in the Gutika, our *smaraṇa* of the *yoga-pīṭha* is under the guidance of Lalitā *sakhī*. The *mañjarīs* will prepare everything and offer it to Lalitā *sakhī*, and she offers everything to Rādhā-Govinda. Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, *mad īśvari pada bhāvi* – “Lalitā Sakhī is like Īśvari to me, because through her I can serve Rādhā-Govinda.” If my *sevā* is to make garlands, I will make the garland and present it to Lalitā Sakhī and she will offer it to the Yugala Kīśora. *Tāra kṛpāya ye hoy smaraṇa* – I am meditating upon Lalitā Sakhī as my Īśvari because all the *sevā* I perform in the *yoga-pīṭha* will only be possible by her blessings. *Tāra pāda-padma aśa dhūli koroṇ mastaka bhūṣaṇa*, “taking the dust of the lotus feet of Vṛndāvana Dāsa on my head, I surrender myself to him, as I consider him my guru.”

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has explained all the external truths of Baladeva Candra, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, and Śrī Nitāi. This Vṛndāvana Dāsa, who is often quoted here by Śrīla Rāmāi Ṭhākura, is Śrī Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, the author of the book Bhajana Candrikā. He is not the Vṛndāvana Dāsa who wrote Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata. He is showing gratitude and honour to Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, as his *śīkṣā guru*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has revealed all the truths about Balarāma, explaining the oneness of all of them and then lastly described the deep love and attachment Balarāma has for Kṛṣṇa.

Thus ends the 1<sup>st</sup> Wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā, Śakti-Tattva Vicāra.

## Questions and Answers

Q: Where does Jāhnavā Mātā fit into this *tattva*?

A: Jāhnavā Mātā is herself Anaṅga Mañjarī.

Q: It is amazing that Balarāma is Anaṅga Mañjarī and Jāhnavā Mātā is also Anaṅga Mañjarī.

A: Nityānanda Prabhu and Jāhnavā Mātā are both Anaṅga Mañjarī. They are a non-different truth. They are the same form, same power, and same truth. If we try to figure it out by logic, it is inconceivable, but where love is concerned, nothing is impossible. In *Gaura-līlā*, we can find many associates of Gaura with more than one identity. Some *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs* have come with dual forms. Sometimes, in one form we can find two personalities! Like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, he is an incarnation of both Brahmā and Prahlāda. Then there is Murāri Gupta, he is Hanuman. Gadādhara Paṇḍita is a combined form of Rādhārāṇī and Lalitā Devī.<sup>13</sup> He is the *vilāsa* form of Rādhārāṇī, and Nārahari Sarkār is the *āveśa* form of Rādhārāṇī.

Caitanya-*līlā* is very tricky. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared here in Kali-yuga with his mysterious moods. For this reason, Rūpa Goswāmī revealed the reason for Mahāprabhu's advent in a remarkable way. In India, children are known by their father's name. But, Rūpa Goswāmī addressed Mahāprabhu as Śacīnandana Gaurahari, and we are till now worshipping Him, as Śacīnandana. However, in Indian culture even nowadays the children are addressed by their father's name. Although Rūpa Goswāmī knew this tradition He still addressed Him as Śacīnandana to reveal this amazing mood of Mahāprabhu. He came in a male form, but with a feminine mood, with Rādhā *bhāva*. Everything is amazing and extraordinary in *Gaura-līlā*.

Q: Some people are confused about Anaṅga Mañjarī *tattva*, because she is a *mañjarī*, but her position is that of a *sakhī* and not of a *mañjarī*.

A: The truth about *mañjarīs* is that all *mañjarīs* are *sakhīs*, but not all *sakhīs* are *mañjarīs*. The *mañjarīs* are *sakhīs* first and then they are *mañjarīs*, but not all *sakhīs* are *mañjarīs*.

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<sup>13</sup> Although this is mentioned in *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, it is not mentioned in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, perhaps for a good reason, because Rādhārāṇī's mood and Lalitā's mood are very different. Gadādhara is commonly accepted as Rādhārāṇī and Lakṣmī, but not as a combined form of Rādhārāṇī and Lalitā.



Anaṅga Mañjarī is a *sakhī* and a *mañjarī*, both in one.<sup>14</sup> When we go deeper in the next wave, more truths about Anaṅga Mañjarī will be revealed. She performs the same pastimes as Rādhārāṇī did with Kṛṣṇa. We will enter into deeper and deeper discussions in the upcoming verses.

Q: In Anaṅga Mañjarī we find not only a *dāsī* of Rādhārāṇī, but also as a *nāyikā*. How does Anaṅga Mañjarī help the other *mañjarīs* in their service to Rādhārāṇī?

A: Anaṅga Mañjarī knows the most confidential pastimes of Rādhārāṇī, because she is her younger sister. Rādhārāṇī reveals everything to Anaṅga Mañjarī and also to Rūpa Mañjarī. Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rūpa Mañjarī are the closest and dear most to Rādhārāṇī, even more than Lalitā and Viśakā. They are the only ones who can enter into the secret pastimes, and they know all the confidential truths of these pastimes. If we follow them, then they will mercifully reveal these pastimes to us. However, they are always checking the *sādhakas*' hearts and testing them to see, whether they are ready or not.

*Śrī-rūpa-mañjarī tabe donhā vākya śuni mañjūlālī dilo more ei dāsī āni*, Rūpa Mañjarī said, “When I found; that she is very quiet and humble, has a very loving heart and strong dedication to perform her *sevā*, I decided to engage her in Your service.” First, they will test the *mañjarī*, to see if she is prepared to perform dedicated, pure service or not. When they are confident that she is prepared, eager, and has all the proper qualities, they will reveal to her all the necessary skills and knowledge required for the service. They will not only advise her, but also give her guidance. Helping does not mean simply to give some advice; they will stay with us and guide us, until we become perfectly prepared to perform all kinds of confidential *sevā*. In this way, they will engage all the other *mañjarīs* in Rādhārāṇī's service.

Q: Like Rūpa Mañjarī?

A: Yes, both Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī do the same thing. But Anaṅga Mañjarī has a special position. This speciality is revealed by Rāmāi Ṭhākura in this Samputikā. We will hear this in the following chapters

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<sup>14</sup> It is widely accepted that Anaṅga Mañjarī is not a *mañjarī* but one of the eight *vara-sakhīs* (Rūpa Gosvāmī, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 1.121). Which means that she is a *parama-preṣṭha sakhī* and a *yūtheśvarī sakhī* of Rādhikā, having her own *yūtha*. She is *mañjarī* by name only (like the *vara-sakhī* Kandarpa Mañjarī), not by classification. Her *stāyī-bhāva* is a mixture of *sāksāt upabhogātmaka* and *tad-anumodanātmaka*. (Jīva Gosvāmī's terminology in Prīti Sandarbha, Anu 365)

of this scripture. To teach the other *mañjarīs* the process of *sevā*, Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are performing the same duty themselves. First, they have to know the mood, the dedication, *lobha*, and love of the *sādhakas* before they accept them into Rādhārāṇī's service.

Q: How do we know that Rādhārāṇī is the *hlādinī-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī is the *śakti* of Balarāma?

A: We are not supposed to judge the position of Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī with our mundane material intelligence. If we practice *rāgānuga-bhajana* sincerely, then by Their blessings we will feel and realise this. It will spontaneously manifest in our heart – if we practice with strong faith. Faith is the foundation of our *bhajana*. We need unwavering faith in guru and Govinda to advance in our *bhajana*.

Q: Is there any definition in the *śāstra*?

A: There are so many definitions of *hlādinī-śakti*, but if we have no realizations, all these definitions will be just empty words. Only when we receive the blessings of the scriptures, can we realise these things. If we depend only on our mundane intelligence, we will not be able to realise the commentaries and revelations of the Six Goswāmīs or the real meanings of scriptures like the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Only by devotion and strong faith can we realise these *tattvas*. Otherwise, it will remain a mere collection of words. We can only understand Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī through pure love, not through mere words.

Q: I read in one scripture that Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are great friends. Can you describe the relationship between them?

A: It is the same relationship as all the other *mañjarīs* have between themselves, that is, they are all bosom friends. Similarly, with our *Guru-mañjarī*, when we start our service there (in *vraja-līlā*), we become friends. *Guru-sakhīs* and all the *mañjarīs* are friends. Although some are senior by experience, they all are friends on an equal level. There, we need to follow our superior *guru-mañjarīs*. In the service world, she is not our guru, but a senior *mañjarī*, who guides us. Our *guru-mañjarī* also performs her own *sevā*. We will serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī. Our loving service is with Rādhārāṇī – not with Kṛṣṇa.

Q: Is the *sthāyī-bhāva* of Lalitā *kṛṣṇa-rati*?

A: The *sthāyī-bhāva* of the *sakhīs* is *rādhā-dāsyam*.<sup>15</sup> But because they are *sakhīs*, they have different moods. Sometimes, when there is some misunderstanding between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Viśakhā Sakhī would perform *sevā* in favour of Kṛṣṇa in order to bring about reconciliation between the two.

Kṛṣṇa has various kinds of moods. Sometimes He is *rasika-nāyaka* (amorous hero) and sometimes He is *lampaṭa-nāyaka* (debauchee). When this *lampaṭa-nāyaka* mood appears, then the problem arises. Lalitā *sakhī* will provoke Rādhārāṇī: “Oh! He cheated on you! Kṛṣṇa has gone to another *sakhī*’s *kuñja*! You have to punish Him!” When this kind of problem arises, Viśakā *sakhī* will come in favour of Kṛṣṇa, because she likes to see Them united, she likes Them to be always together. She has equal love (*sama-sneha*) for both Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa. When problems arise, Viśakā Sakhī takes the side of Kṛṣṇa, she will say: “Oh Rādhē! He apologized to you, so you must forgive him!” Sometimes Viśakā Sakhī will provide Kṛṣṇa with some tricky advice. She will tell Him what to say to pacify Rādhārāṇī. In this way, the *sakhīs* are serving with various moods in the pastimes. All the *sakhīs* of Rādhārāṇī are in *rādhā-dāsyam*, they are not in *kṛṣṇa-dāsyam*. Sometimes they are favouring Kṛṣṇa, but only to unite the Divine Couple.

Q: Does Anaṅga Mañjarī also have the mood of *dāsyam* towards Rādhārāṇī?

A: The *mañjarīs* are not ordinary *dāsīs*. They have the mood of *dāsyam*, but in *mādhurya-rati*. Why *mādhurya-rati*? Because within *mādhurya-rati*, which is the highest *rasa*, the other moods are also present. When they serve the Divine Couple, they need different moods at different times. If the *mañjarīs* follow the *dāsyam* mood when Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are engaged in amorous play, there will be *rasābhāsa* (contradiction in moods). At such a time they have to follow the mood of *sakhya-bhāva*, friendly mood towards Rādhā.

Sometimes Rādhārāṇī sends Anaṅga Mañjarī to Kṛṣṇa. Anaṅga Mañjarī does not have any independent desire to be intimate with Kṛṣṇa; she is following the desire of Rādhārāṇī. When She is sending her to Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī says, “You should please Kṛṣṇa like Me.” If Anaṅga Mañjarī were to follow the *dāsyam* mood at such a time, it will be *rasābhāsa*. *Mañjarīs* are

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<sup>15</sup> *Rādhā-dāsyam* is not a *sthāyī-bhāva*, and neither is *bhāvollāsa-rati*. The term *sthāyī-bhāva* applies only to the five primary *rasas*. See the appendix for a further discussion of this topic.

in *mādhurya-rati*, but their general mood is in *rādhā-dāsyam*. We all have to follow Śrīmatī's instruction and desire. To do that, we have to be prepared to serve in any mood according to time and circumstances.

Q: Rādhārāṇī is our Rāṇī; is Anaṅga Mañjarī also Rāṇī?

A: No, she may be the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī, but she is also following the direction of Rādhārāṇī. There is only one Queen of Vraja - Rādhārāṇī.

Q: It is said that Rādhārāṇī is always present within Kṛṣṇa, even in separation. Can you explain how is she present within Māthureśa Kṛṣṇa or Dwārakādīśa Kṛṣṇa? Is there any description of Rādhārāṇī manifesting different moods like Kṛṣṇa?

A: In Vidagdha Mādhava and Lalitā Mādhava you will find some stories of Rādhārāṇī in Dwārakā. Rūpa Goswāmī explains that in Dwārakā, Rādhārāṇī is Satyabhāmā Devī. But while in Dwārakā, when he was roaming in Nava Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa only relished the actual mood of Rādhārāṇī. In the form of Satyabhāmā, she is in the *aiśvarya* mood of Dwārakādīśa Kṛṣṇa. There is no Vraja-*prema* mood there. Even that was not hundred percent pure, rather it was a very close resemblance of that Vraja-*bhāva*. At that time Kṛṣṇa felt that he was in Vṛndāvana, *vṛndāvanam parityajya padam ekam na gacchati* – “My mind and heart are always in Vṛndāvana. I never leave Vṛndāvana. Because of my duties, I had to go out, but by my mind and heart I am always there.” Whenever he is in Nava Vṛndāvana, he feels this mood, which is a very close resemblance of the mood of Vṛndāvana. Outside of Vṛndāvana, the pure mood of Vṛndāvana will never manifest. It is called *tadādmikā-prema*.<sup>16</sup>

Q: When a new *mañjarī* is introduced to Rādhārāṇī, has there ever been a case when she was rejected, because she does not meet the proper requirements?

A: If we have not attained perfection here through our *sādhana*, we will not reach there because first we would be tested by our Guru-*mañjarī*, and then she would take us to Rūpa mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī, and then they would test us again. They would only introduce us when we have perfected our *sevā*.

Q: In Govinda Līlāmṛita it is mentioned that in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the service begins from Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*. Anaṅga-ānanda-ambuja *kuñja* first, then it continues to the other *sakhī*'s *kuñjas*; Rādhā-kuṇḍa manifested

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<sup>16</sup> *tadādmikā* – to be one at heart with one's object of love.

first from Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*, and then every other *kuñja* expanded from there. Is it because she is the sister of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī?

A: Yes, that is correct. That is how Rādhā-Kuṇḍa manifested, beginning from her *kuñja* and then proceeding to all the other *kuñjas* around the Kuṇḍa. Today is Rādhā-kuṇḍa's appearance day, Bahulāṣṭami. In Govinda Līlāmṛita, it is mentioned how Rādhā-Kuṇḍa manifested. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī accused Kṛṣṇa of being contaminated after killing the bull demon. She told Him that He should bathe in all the holy *tīrthas* to purify Himself and that is how all the holy *tīrthas* first appeared in Śyāma-Kuṇḍa and later in Rādhā-Kuṇḍa. We all know and have heard of that, but there are some extra details mentioned in Govinda Līlāmṛita, a description of how the *kuñjas* around Rādhā-Kuṇḍa manifested, and it begins not from Lalitā-*kuñja*, but from Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja* (Anaṅga *ambuja Kuñja*), that is, from the middle of Rādhā-Kuṇḍa. Then Govinda Līlāmṛita proceeds to describe Lalitā *sakhī's kuñja*, then Viśākhā, and then to all the others sequentially, according to the seniority of the *sakhīs*. From this, we understand the importance and position of Anaṅga Mañjarī more deeply in relation to Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa.

Q: Is Anaṅga Mañjarī a *sama-snehādhikā sakhī* or *rādhā-snehādhikā sakhī*?

A: She is a *rādhā-snehādhikā sakhī* and *mañjarī*,<sup>17</sup> both in one form. We will come to these details later.

Q: You were speaking about how all the five kinds of *rasas* are present in *mañjarī-bhāva*, and I was wondering how *vātsalya-rasa* is present in *mañjarī-bhāva*?

A: To know about *mañjarī-bhāva*, you must know the different moods in *mādhurya-rasa*. In the scriptures, such as the *rasa-śāstra*, the nature of women or girls is described. Especially how they interact with their family members, specifically with their husband. They care and nourish their husband, like a child in *vātsalya-bhāva*; when they discuss something with their husband, then they adopt the friendly mood; when they cook or prepare something for him, they are in *dāsyā* mood; when they engage in conjugal pastimes, they are in *mādhurya* mood. In Caitanya Caritāmṛta, all the different *rasas* in Vraja-līlā are mentioned. Dāsyā mood is a very basic mood. When the friends are playing with Kṛṣṇa, they are in *sakhya* mood. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa is tired and He takes rest under a tree, then His friends massage His feet or fan Him; at this time, they are in *dāsyā* mood. Therefore,

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<sup>17</sup> As mentioned above, the assertion that Anaṅga Mañjarī is a *mañjarī* is problematic and *ā-śāstric*.

*dāśya-rasa* is also present in *sakhyā-rasa*. Higher than this is *vātsalya-rasa*. In the parental mood, *dāśya* and *sakhyā* are also present. When parents are taking care of their children, they are adopting the *dāśya* mood. When they are guiding or chastising the children, they are in *vātsalya-bhāva*. But, when the children grow up, the parents become their friends, *sakhyā-bhāva*. Similarly, in *mādhurya-rati*, you will find the other four *rasas*: *śānta*, *dāśya*, *sakhyā*, and *vātsalya*. Śrīman Mahāprabhu has revealed to us this *mañjarī-bhāva* where we can worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in *mādhurya-rati* in all five *rasas*. You will find Gopāl in almost every house even if they worship Kṛṣṇa in *mādhurya-rati*, yet we cannot worship Gopāla in *mādhurya-rati*. Therefore, *mañjarī-bhāva*, although in *mādhurya-rati*, contains all the other moods within it.

Q: You were explaining how Yogamāyā covers Kṛṣṇa's *aiśvarya* and thus He always sees Himself as a cowherd boy. However, to attain perfection, we first have to understand Kṛṣṇa's divinity in the *aiśvarya* aspect. Only then, can we enter into rāgānuga. What is the process for us to get uncovered by Yogamāyā and be able to see Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary person, as a cowherd boy ?

A: At the beginning stage, our heart is full of *aiśvarya*. We cannot see Kṛṣṇa as the cowherd boy. But after some time, we will receive blessings through our *bhajana*. Everything depends on *kṛpā*. When we are totally engaged with full dedication in *aiśvarya*, then gradually *kṛpā*, first from Gurudeva, and then from the *mahā-mantra* will be bestowed upon us. When we get *kṛpā* from the *mahā-mantra*, then *līlā* will appear in our heart, and after that slowly *prema* will appear. Then Kṛṣṇa himself will appear as the cowherd boy, not as Svayam Bhagavān. Everything depends on Śrī Guru's *kṛpā*, which comes from our *bhajana*. It all depends on how much greed we have in our heart. Only by this greed will we get this mood.

Q: In the *Brahma-vimohana-līlā*, how is it that Balarāma also appeared bewildered? How could He not understand that Kṛṣṇa had taken the form of so many cows and cowherd boys?

A: It was not that He was bewildered. Balarāma was not present there during this *līlā* when Kṛṣṇa manifested all these other replica forms of the calves, the cows, and the cowherd boys. That day was Balarāma's birthday day and Rohiṇī Devī forbade Balarāma to go for cow herding. However, it did not take Balarāma too long to notice what had happened during His absence. One day Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and all the boys and calves were at the bottom Girirāja hill. Nanda Bābā and the cowherds had brought all their cows to the top of the hill. As soon as the cows saw their calves at the bottom of

the hill, they started running down and the cowherds couldn't stop them. At that moment Balarāma noticed that something was unusual, as this had never happened before. This is the first time the cows were running towards their calves in this manner. He glanced towards Kṛṣṇa, and through indication Kṛṣṇa explained everything. Balarāma immediately understood what had happened.

On the day Brahmā came to glorify Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma was not present as it was once again His appearance day (the same day a year later). After Brahmā returned all the boys, they went back to their homes and told their mother, "Oh mother, do you know what Kṛṣṇa did today? He killed a big snake (Aghāsura) in the forest." This incident took place that same day a year earlier. That whole year vanished from their minds by Kṛṣṇa's deluding potency. Anyhow, Balarāma knows everything, because Kṛṣṇa cannot do anything without the support of Balarāma.

Q: You were telling the stories how the deities reciprocated in *vātsalya-rasa*. Is there any example where the deities have reciprocated in *mādhurya-rasa*?

A: One example is Mīrābai. She married the deity of Giridhārī. She had a special mood for her deity in *mādhurya-rasa*. She saw and felt Kṛṣṇa's presence within her deity. Kṛṣṇa reciprocates according to how we worship the deity and He accepts everything in that same mood. Mīrābai is not the only example. There are so many examples of devotees who were attached to their deity in different moods.

Another example is Rāma Kṛṣṇa Pandit Bābā. During His childhood he used to play marbles with Kṛṣṇa, just like his friend. Actually, he was not aware it was the deity with whom he was playing. One afternoon this boy, Rāma Kṛṣṇa, was shouting in front of the temple. Usually, during noontime after *prasād*, all the temples are closed and locked. The father of the boy was the *pūjārī* of the temple and he had locked the door of the temple and gone home to take rest. Rāma Kṛṣṇa was only about seven or eight years old at that time and he stood in front of the door and started shouting and crying. People asked him why he was crying. Pointing to the temple deity room he said, "That boy has stolen all my marbles." When they asked, "Which boy?" He replied, "That boy took all my marbles by force and ran inside the temple."

On hearing the commotion, the boy's father came running and asked him, why he was crying. The boy said, "I want my marbles back" and started throwing tantrums. The father started beating him, but the people around stopped him and said, "Don't beat him. Let us see if he is telling the truth."

So the boy's father opened the temple's door and the boy said, "There he is, the boy who stole my marbles. He has kept them in his waist belt. Please look for them, they must be there." His father searched the deity's waist belt and found all the marbles on Kṛṣṇa's deity form.

This kind of exchange can happen with the deities, if we do not see them just as idols. If we have love for them, we can bring the deity to life, whether they are made of wood, metal, or stone. They will reciprocate with us in any mood, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, or *mādhurya* - in whichever mood we serve them. Mīrābai married her Giridhārī and to her, it was not just a deity, it was her husband. Nothing is impossible if we have that kind of unflinching devotion for the Lord.

Q: I would like to know, if there is any *gāyatrī-mantra* specially for Balarāma? Will it be helpful to us to recite that *mantra*?

A: Yes, there is a *gāyatrī-mantra* for Balarāma. But if you chant the *yugala-mantra* (Gopāla mantra), then you will get the same blessings from Balarāma, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī. There is no need to worship Balarāma separately. If someone has a strong attachment towards Balarāma, then he can recite this *mantra* to worship him separately.

Q: I would like to hear something about Rāmāi Ṭhākura who wrote Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā.

A: He was the foremost disciple and adopted son of Jāhnavā Mātā. When he was very young, Jāhnavā Mātā adopted him and personally nurtured his special qualities. She empowered him to explain this scripture, Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā so perfectly, which no one else could have done, because he received the special blessings of Jāhnavā Mātā.

Q: Today is Vīracandra's appearance day. Can you speak something about Him?

A: When the time came for Śrīman Mahāprabhu to end His manifest *līlā*, all the devotees were very deeply distressed. They knew Mahāprabhu was going to leave very soon, and fretted over how they were going to carry on their existence without Him. He was their life and soul and it was impossible for them to even imagine their life without Him. Then Mahāprabhu pacified them and told them that He would appear again as the son of Nītāi. He told them, "I have not completed my mission here, because of my taking *sannyāsa*. So, I will come again, as the son of Nītāi."

Abhirāma Ṭhākura was also present there. He was Śrīdāmā *sakhā* in *vraja-līlā*. He asked Mahāprabhu how they would be able to recognize his appearance. Mahāprabhu told him that he would be able to realise it by using his special potency. Abhirāma Ṭhākura had a special power that only divine



personalities could withstand his *praṇāma*. If he offered *praṇāma* to anybody who was not a divine personality, that person would die instantly. Even *ratna-maya* deities made of stone, if they were not properly worshiped, would burst to bits if Abhirāma Ṭhākura offered his *praṇāma* to them.

So, whenever a child was born to Vasudhā and Nityānanda Prabhu, Abhirāma Ṭhākura would offer his *praṇāma* and the child would die. In this way, six babies born to Vasudhā Mātā died one after the other due to the *praṇāma* of Abhirāma Ṭhākura. The seventh child, Gaṅga Mātā Goswāmīnī, the elder sister of Vīracandra, survived his *praṇāma*. Abhirāma Ṭhākura realized that she was a divine personality and saw her eternal *svarūpa* of Premabhora Mañjarī through his meditation. When the eighth child was born, Vasudhā Mātā was again in fear of Abhirāma Ṭhākura. Again, she tried her best to stop him, but Abhirāma Ṭhākura persisted and said, “I have to test and see if this is my Prabhu or not, because he promised us that he will reappear as your child and he authorized me to confirm this with my *praṇāma*.” A fight broke out between Vasudhā Mātā and Abhirāma Ṭhākura, as she was trying very hard to prevent Abhirāma from getting close to her child. In the tussle, Abhirāma managed to pay his obeisances close to the new-born baby’s feet and baby Vīracandra kicked Abhirāma’s head with His lotus foot so hard, that the stout Abhirāma went flying back and fell down prostrated on the floor. He then quickly got up and placed the feet of baby Vīracandra on his head. Nothing happened to the child; he wasn’t the least affected by the *praṇāma*. Abhirāma Ṭhākura was thrilled with joy and started dancing and crying in ecstasy, convinced that this child was his Mahāprabhu. He had, indeed, appeared once again, as he promised. Both Nityānanda and Mahāprabhu are present in Vīracandra Prabhu. So, today, being his appearance day, we pay our obeisances to this magnanimous form of Vīracandra, who is the astonishing, combined form of Nītāi and Gaura.

Q: We have heard about Balarāma performing the *rasa* dance and there is some controversy, as some say He is dancing with the same *gopīs* of Kṛṣṇa and some say he has his own *gopīs*. What is the truth of the matter?

A: It is completely impossible that Balarāma would perform *rasa* with the same *gopīs* of Kṛṣṇa. How is it possible that the elder brother and younger brother relish intimate pastimes with the same *gopīs*? Baladeva Candra has His own *sakhīs* and He enjoys *rasa* with them.

Q: What is the special service that Anaṅga Mañjarī guides the other *mañjarīs* in? What is her specialty?

A: It is in all kinds of *sevā*. *Mañjarīs* are not perfect in just one service. They have to be perfect in all kinds of service. Anaṅga Mañjarī and

Rūpa Mañjarī guide all the other *mañjarīs* in all kinds of *sevā*, not just one particular *sevā*. *Mañjarīs* would never say, “Oh! I don’t know this” or “I cannot do this or that *sevā*.” The specialty of Anaṅga Mañjarī is in her own mood of *sevā*. When guiding others, she is guiding them just like Rūpa mañjarī in all kinds of *sevā*.

Q: Who is Rāmāi Ṭhākura in *vraja-līlā*?

A: In Gaura Gaṇoddeśa Dīpikā, there is no mention of his position in *vraja-līlā*.<sup>18</sup> He is also not present in the Yogapīṭha. It is said in Murali Vilāsa that he is an incarnation of Vamśivadana Ṭhākura, who is an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa’s flute.

Q: How do we know when we have attained Nitāi’s *kṛpā*?

A: We will get to know this, when we receive all the knowledge on how to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in their confidential pastimes. We do not have to wait to be trained to become perfect. By Nitāi’s *kṛpā*, we will get perfection. Most importantly, we will get *prema* by Nitāi’s *kṛpā*. No one else can give us this *prema* except Him. Not even Kṛṣṇa can give that. If you go to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and ask for *prema*, He too will not be able to give it. Before Nitāicāṇḍ joined Him in His *līlā*, Mahāprabhu did not start His preaching. Nitāi asked Him, “Why are you doing *kīrtana* and enjoying only with your close associates behind closed doors? You have to open the doors for everyone. I think You have forgotten why You have appeared here in this *kali-yuga*. Have You forgotten your promises?” Śrīman Mahāprabhu replied: “No, I have not forgotten anything. I was waiting for You! Yes, I promised that I will distribute this *Vraja-prema* to everyone, but it all depends on You. I promised will give them *prema*, but how can I give that when you are the *prema-bhandari* (keeper of *prema*). You have to fulfil My promise.” That is how the preaching of Śrīman Mahāprabhu started. Nitāi started it, not Mahāprabhu. We have to take Nitāi’s shelter first, as only He can give that *prema*.

Q: I am begging on behalf of everyone, can you please bestow upon all of us that *prema*.

A: I am not Nitāi. I am just a very fallen servant of Nitāi. Maybe from my previous life’s *sukṛti*, I got this fortune to take birth in His family, but I have none of his qualities and can only pray to him on your behalf.

Q: Our Gurudeva is Nitāi or Nitāi is Gurudeva?

A: We have to see Nitāi in our Gurudeva. *Guru-tattva* is Nitāi, and Nitāi is Jagat Guru.

<sup>18</sup> His name in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is Ratna Mañjarī.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave – Rasa Kautuka

(Festival of Rasa)

In this chapter, Rāmāi Ṭhākura slowly enters into deeper insights of Baladeva Candra’s qualities and reveals his female form, Anaṅga Mañjarī.

jaya śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya, kali-yuga koile dhanya  
nityānanda saha avatārī  
advaitācārya loiyā, jīvera sadaya hoiyā  
tri-jagate bolāilā hari (1)

“All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who blessed the age of Kali by descending with the company of Nityānanda, Advaita Ācārya and all his eternal associates. He showered mercy on the conditioned souls by making the three worlds chant the holy names of Hari.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is glorifying Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who appeared in this world with Nityānanda and Advaita Candra to bestow his mercy on all the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga. They descended just for the purpose of taking us back to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. Only by the power of Harināma can we be freed from all the conditioning caused by Maya, Kali Maharaja and Śukrācārya. We are neither capable nor intelligent enough to realize that we are indulging in the temporary pleasures of this material world under their influence. They trick us in the disguise of being our well-wishers with their friendly approach. By associating with such so-called friends, we get misguided and bound by engagement in material pleasures.

The last verse in the Īsopaniṣad is very important: Śruti, the *śāstra-devata*, prays to Īśvara:

hiraṇmayena pātreṇa  
satyasyāpihitam mukham  
tat tvam pūṣann apāvṛṇu  
satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye

“O my Lord, You are the maintainer of the entire universe, and devotional service to You is the highest religious principle. Therefore, I pray that You will also maintain me. Your transcendental form is covered by the yoga-māyā. The *Brahmā-jyoti* is the covering of the internal potency. May You

kindly remove this glowing effulgence that impedes my seeing Your sac-*cid-ānanda-vigraha*, Your eternal form of bliss and knowledge.” (Śrī Īsopaniṣad 15)

“Hey Īśvara, you are not only our reverential Lord, but you are also our parent. You are known as *poṣaṇa*, the one who nurtures us. It is your duty to always take care of us.”

We may try to realise the transcendental truth about Īśvara very sincerely, but we keep failing because we are always faced with so many obstacles that appear like glittering gold to deviate us from our attempts. The *ṛṣis* say that the path to Bhagavān is covered by a golden curtain which is an obstacle that come from *kali-anucara*, the misguiding and enchanting behaviour of Kali that deceives us into going in the wrong direction. Covered by illusion, we fail to distinguish the good from the bad. So, Śruti is appealing to Bhagavān to remove all obstacles, *tat tvam pūṣann apāvṛṇu*, please remove the curtain which is an impediment in our path towards our goal of attaining you.

Then Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared and gave us Harināma. Before the advent of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, only a few *sādhakas* were chanting the Harināma *mahā-mantra*. After Mahāprabhu started His preaching, *tri-jagate bolāilā hari*, all the three worlds started chanting the *mahā-mantra*. Just by chanting the *mahā-mantra*, we can achieve everything. But we have to be free from all kinds of false ego<sup>19</sup> and maintain a mood of humility to chant pure Harināma. Chanting one or two hundred thousand names daily will not bear any fruit if we do not surrender with humility to Śrī Gaura and Nityānanda. In Kali-yuga, this is the only way to be free from material bondage.

Thus, before beginning the second wave, Rāmāi Ṭhākura, in a mood of surrender offers his humble prayers to Śrīman Mahāprabhu who has appeared here in Kali-yuga with Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Advaita Candra.

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<sup>19</sup> ‘False ego’ is a false term, a misnomer. There is either material ego or spiritual ego. Spiritual ego means our *svarūpa* and the exclusive desire to please Kṛṣṇa. There is no “ego” as such in the spiritual world. When pride is exhibited it is also for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa.

śrī vaiṣṇava kṛpā bole, nitāi caitanya mile  
 tabe gurudeve hoy rati  
 eka vastu tina dhāma, vastu bhede tina nāma  
 abhedārthe koriho pīriti (2)

“By the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, we attain the mercy of Nitāi and Caitanya. Only then, can we establish a firm attachment to Śrī gurudeva. These three *tattvas* are the same in three different forms and names. Love them equally without differentiating them.”

### Commentary:

Here, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains something very amazing. No one has ever explained all these three *tattvas* on the same platform. First and foremost, he says that we need *vaiṣṇava-kṛpā* or *bhakta-kṛpā*. It is impossible to attain blessings from Nitāi and Gaurāṅga or even the love for our Gurudeva without *vaiṣṇava-kṛpā*. By this verse we are reminded of King Rahūgaṇa and Jaḍa Bharata, a story from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa had the desire to obtain *bhagavata-kṛpā* through a quick and simple method. He had passed three-quarters of his life, without any attempt at attaining *bhagavata-kṛpā*. Feeling desperate, he asked his ministers for advice. The ministers called all the scholars in the kingdom and asked their opinion and they all came to one conclusion. They advised that the best way to attain *bhagavata-kṛpā* without observing great penances would be by going on pilgrimage and visiting all the holy places. Thus, without procrastinating any further, Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa started his pilgrimage to visit all the holy *tirthas* with an entourage of bodyguards, cooks and servants. This is when he met Jaḍa Bharata.

Jaḍa Bharata was King Bharata in his previous life. He had renounced His position as king in the latter part of his life and moved to the forest to perform *sādhana* to attain liberation. He had attained higher stages of consciousness but unfortunately, near the end of his life he became attached to a little doe which had lost its mother. Engrossed in taking care of the doe, He slowly started neglecting his spiritual practices. One fine day the doe went missing. King Bharata was overcome with intense sorrow and died thinking of the doe. As a result, he was born again as a doe. Though trapped in the body of a doe, his actions were like those of a *yogi*, because he could remember his past life and the reason why he had been reborn as a doe. He deeply lamented his mistake. This led to his rebirth from the womb of a *brāhmin* woman. Knowing that his past actions had led him astray, he was

cautious about developing any kind of attachment to anyone or anything in this life. He stayed aloof from his family members and acted like a fool. This resulted in his being ill-treated by his siblings.

One day, King Rahūgaṇa's men found him on the road and recruited him to be the king's palanquin bearer. However while walking, Jaḍa Bharata was very attentive to avoid stepping on any ants. As he tried to side-step them, he constantly jolted the palanquin.

This enraged the king and it resulted in a profound dialogue between the king and Jada Bharata. The king soon realized that he had encountered a spiritually enlightened personality and decided to take shelter at his lotus feet. He humbly begged Jada Bharata to guide him on the path to enlightenment.

The first question Jada Bharata asked the king was: “Oh! Rahūgaṇa, why are you going on pilgrimage to all the holy-tirthas?” Maharaja Rahūgaṇa replied, “To attain *bhagavata-kṛpā*.” Jada Bharata said: “Rahūgaṇa! It is impossible to attain *bhagavata-kṛpā* in this way. You will only get pious credits, by which you can attain the heavenly planets and nothing more. And once these credits are exhausted, you will have to come back to this material world again.” He then asked Maharaja Rahūgaṇa if he knew any other method mentioned in the scriptures for the path of self-realization. Maharaja Rahūgaṇa mentioned many processes, like *tapasya*, fire sacrifices and *vanaprastha* – performing great austerities in the forest, and so on. All his points were rejected by Jada Bharata one after the other. Finally, Jada Bharata said:

rahūgaṇaitat tapasā na yāti  
na cejyayā nirvapaṇād grhād vā  
na cchandasā naiva jalāgni-sūryair  
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam

“O King Rahūgaṇa, the perfectional stage of devotional service, or the *paRāmahaṁsa* stage of life, cannot be attained unless one is blessed by the foot-dust of the great devotees. It is never attained by *tapasya* [austerity], the Vedic worshipping process, acceptance of the renounced order of life, the discharge of the duties of household life, the chanting of the Vedic hymns, or the performance of penances in the hot sun, within cold water or before the blazing fire.” (SB 5.12.12)

Bhagavān cannot be known by austerities, by worship or by leaving one's home and going to the forest to meditate. All these processes are fruitless.

Even by living in one's home and reciting hymns from the Vedas, one has to follow the prescribed rules. It is not possible in that way either. Bhagavān can be known neither by reciting the Vedas nor by worshiping the demigods. As long as one does not smear oneself with the foot dust of great saintly devotees, one cannot achieve any result from all these activities. *Vaiṣṇava-carāṇa-reṇu bhūṣaṇa koriya tanu*; if we decorate ourselves with the dust from the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, all austerities that we perform will be fruitful. If we have not attained *Vaiṣṇava-kṛpā* or *bhakta-kṛpā*, Bhagavān will not even glance at us.

Thus, Rāmāi Ṭhākura advises us to take shelter of the lotus feet of pure Vaiṣṇavas, who are *rasika-bhaktas*.

*Prema-rasa* has the quality of water. It is the nature of liquid to always flow downwards. And if we take shelter of great *rasika-vaiṣṇavas*, then this liquid of *prema-rasa* will flow down from their hearts to our hearts.

Vedic scriptures are like a wish-fulfilling tree. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is known, as *nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam*. "It is the ripened fruit of that wish-fulfilling tree and it is in liquid form." We do not need to make any great effort to drink water. Similarly, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is a scripture full of *prema-rasa*. It is *rasa śāstra śreṣṭha*, it is the topmost of all *rasa-śāstras*, and its *svarūpa* is *galitam phalam*, like a juicy, fully ripened fruit.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura emphasizes this point that, if we take shelter of the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas and please them with our surrender, this liquid fruit will flow down from their hearts to ours, but all the qualities of complete self-surrender must be there:

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam  
rakṣiṣyātīti viśvāso gopṭṛtve varaṇaṁ tathā  
ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgaṭiḥ

"The six kinds of surrender are the acceptance of things favourable to devotional service, rejection of unfavourable things, conviction that Kṛṣṇa will protect me, acceptance of Kṛṣṇa as one's maintainer, full self-surrender, and humility." (HBV 11.676/CC Madhya 22.100)

Our mood must be favourable to the one whom we are taking shelter of. We have to stay away from all activities, which are unfavourable to him. We have to accept him, as our protector with unconditional faith and surrender. *ātma-nikṣepa*, we have to surrender to him in three ways: physically,

verbally, and mentally. Then we have to show our greed to attain his *kṛpā* and eventually he will open his heart. Only then will the *prema-rasa* flow down to us.

In the phrase, *śrī vaiṣṇava kṛpā bole*, we find, that Rāmāi Ṭhākura has used the word *śrī* in front of the word Vaiṣṇava. This is very unusual. The meaning of *śrī* is wealth and beauty; Vaiṣṇavas have both these qualities. They are adorned with the wealth and beauty of *kṛṣṇa-prema* by which they attract everyone. Just by looking at them, we can feel that they possess some great wealth.

Once we are blessed by such a Vaiṣṇava, then *nitāi caitanya mile*, we will attain Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Gaurāṅga. Before reaching this stage, we must have strong love and faith in Gurudeva. There must be a strong bondage of very deep and sacred love between guru and disciple. Śrī Gurudeva opens his heart to us, when he sees deep love and attachment in our eyes and through our service. This kind of *śaraṇāgati* will melt his heart and result in the flow of his *kṛpā*. He will start revealing all the secrets of *bhajana* to us. Only Gurudeva can reveal the secret *bhajana* of *nikuñja-sevā*. Once we have established a deep connection with Śrī Gurudeva, when he is pleased, he will shower his mercy through his *kṛpā-dṛiṣṭi*. His blessings flow by his merciful glance and through his sweet smile. Gurudeva does not need to say verbally, “I am blessing you.” We must always keep the smiling face of Gurudeva in our hearts. In this way, we will always be protected by him. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is emphasizing the importance of the underlying meaning of this verse;

śrī vaiṣṇava kṛpā bole, nitāi caitanya mile  
tabe gurudeve hoy rati

“Only after receiving the blessings of pure Vaiṣṇavas, will we feel dedication, love and attachment for our Gurudeva.”

eka vastu tina dhāma, vastu bhede tina nāma  
abhedārthe koriho pīriti

An amazing truth is revealed here. Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, all three of them – Nitāi, Caitanya and Śrī Gurudeva – are one, only their *dhāmas* are separate. According to *tattva* they are one, but their place and functions are different. *Vastu bhede tina nāma*, in principle, they have three names – Nitāi, Gaura and Śrī gurudeva. But in our inner perception, we have to see all three of



them on the same platform and offer equal respect and honour to them. Rāmāi Thākura has made it very clear, that although they are the same by *tattva*, we should not worship them on the same level.

We should not offer Tulasī at the lotus feet of Gurudeva, as it is considered a great offense. Nowadays it is very popular to worship guru as Bhagavān ; disciples offer Tulasī and *bilva-pata* at the lotus feet of Gurudeva. In the Kali-Santarana-Upaniṣad it is mentioned that because of such disciples the guru has to go to hell. When the disciples worship guru as their *iṣṭa*, as Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān , they are responsible for sending their guru to hell. They have to show the same respect, but should not worship their guru in the same way as they worship their *iṣṭa*. It is the responsibility of the guru to give proper guidance to his disciples. In some cases, if the guru has already departed or is far away from the disciples, then it is not possible for him to guide them. Even if the disciples offer Tulasī at the feet of their guru on the altar, the guru has to bear the offense.

We must give the same respect and honour to Śrī guru, as Bhagavān. Kṛṣṇa himself has mentioned this in the Bhāgavatam:

ācāryam mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit  
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guru

“Oh Uddhava! Know the *ācārya* to be as good as me. He is my very *svarūpa* (My expansion). At no time should one, out of envy, neglect or disrespect the guru as an ordinary mortal, nor should he be considered to have any faults, because the guru is the sum total of all the demigods.” (SB 11.17.27)

We must know our guru to be non-different from Bhagavān. We should neither disrespect him nor think that he is a normal human being of this world. guru is a *tattva*, a truth that is not from this world. He may be in the human form like us, but if at any time we make any comparison like, “I am more knowledgeable than my guru,” it will be a great offense. We must always remember, that Śrī guru is a *tattva*; a divine concept. He is not the physical young or old body. He will always remain in our vision, as we saw him the first time in his physical form. After we receive our *siddha-praṇālī*, we will visualize him as a young *brahmin* boy or a young *gopī*. We should not identify him with his material body. Whether he is young or old, he is beyond everything, *na martya-buddhyāsūyeta*. He is a *tattva*, which is formless.

*Abhedārthe koriho pīriti*, we have to love all three equally: Nītāi, Gaura and Gurudeva.

Rāmāi Thākura has taken all his quotes and *śloka*s from various scriptures. Nothing is based on his own speculation. He has taken verses from Bhajana Candrikā by Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, Stavāvalī by Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, etc.

Here he is quoting some Sanskrit verses from Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād by Śrīnātha Paṇḍita:<sup>20</sup>

ānandāmśe ca rādhāyā hlādinī śakti sārāgāḥ  
sad ānandāmśato rāmaḥ puṁ prakṛtyātmakaḥ paraḥ (3)

“Śrī Rādhā and her *śaktis* are the embodiment of the pleasure-giving potency of which Rādhā is the essence. The existential potency, Balarāma, has both male and female forms.” (Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād)

“Rādhā and the other *śaktis* represent the *ānandāmśa* of which Rādhā is the essence. The *ānandāmśa* aspect of Balarāma consists of both a male and a female form.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Thākura is now beginning to explain the actual truth about Balarāma, the Saṅkaraṣaṇa-tattva. Here he explains something astounding. Rādhārāṇī and all other *gopīs* are *hlādinī-śakti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *ānandāmśa*, bliss potency, is Rādhārāṇī in *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. She is the deity of *hlādinī-śakti*. All the other *gopīs* are expansions of Rādhārāṇī. This indicates that the *ānandāmśa* consists only of the feminine gender and there is no masculine gender. In previous verses, he described Balarāma also as *ānandāmśa*, the bliss potency. The surprising truth revealed here is that Balarāma-tattva consists of both the masculine and feminine gender in one form. *puṁ prakṛtyātmakaḥ paraḥ*; *puruṣa* (male aspect) and *prakṛti* (female aspect) both in one form.

prākṛtyāmśena rāmo'sau golokābjādi kārakaḥ  
yatra vṛndāvane kuñje rādhikā kṛṣṇa yoh (4)

<sup>20</sup> This is obviously a mistake. In Dhyana-candra Gosvāmī's *Śrī Gaura-Govinda-arcaṇa-smaraṇa-paddhati* it is mentioned that Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād is from the Brahmānda Purāṇa.

“Through his *prākṛti* (inherent) potency Balarāma creates Goloka Dhāma, which is like a thousand-petalled lotus, and it is there in Vrindavan’s *kuñjas* that Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa enjoy their amorous pastimes.” (Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād)

### Commentary:

By his nature, Baladeva Candra has two moods and two forms. What is his function in the *nitya-dhāma*? Using the *prākṛti* power, his feminine aspect, he creates the thousand-petalled lotus, where Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī are performing their secret pastimes.

The confidential pastimes that Kṛṣṇa performs in Bhauma Vṛndāvana are also *nitya-līlā*, eternal pastimes. They are eternal just like in Goloka Vṛndāvana. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is asserting this fact that the *līlā* in Bhauma Vṛndāvana and Goloka Vṛndāvana are both created by Balarāma. *golokābjādi kārakah*; this Goloka created by Balarāma looks like an “*abja*”, a lotus. This is where Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī perform their conjugal pastimes. In Goloka Vṛndāvana, there are no varieties of *līlās*. Kṛṣṇa is always performing *rasa-līlā* with his eternal associates. Rādhārāṇī is not married to anyone nor does she belong to her in-laws home. She is *nitya-priya* there and is always in union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is why Kṛṣṇa appeared here in Bhauma Vṛndāvana to relish *parakīya-prema*. In Goloka Vṛndāvana, we will never find different kinds of *līlās*. There is only one *līlā* and that is *rasa-līlā* [*nitya-vihara*].<sup>21</sup>

prākṛtyāmśe balarāma, racaye goloka dhāma  
sahasrābja dala ye tāhāra  
gokulākhyā tāra nāma, vṛndāvana sei dhāma  
rādhā-kṛṣṇa yāhāte vihāra (5)

“By the power of his *prākṛti*, Balarāma creates Goloka-Dhāma, the thousand-petalled lotus, and it is known as Goloka Vṛndāvana or Goloka-Gokula. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī with all their close associates enjoy their pastimes here.”

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<sup>21</sup> This is the conception of Jīva Gosvāmī who prefers *svakīya bhāva* but Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura strongly disagrees and writes that both *parkaṭa* and *aprakaṭa līlās* are eternal and therefore in *aprakaṭa līlā* (Goloka Vṛndāvana) there is also *parakīya bhāva*, the husbands are real, Rādhārāṇī goes to her in-laws in Yāvat, etc.

sad amśe balarāma, jagat pati jagaddhāma  
 nīla-varṇa rūpe misāiyā  
 kṛṣṇera yoteko līlā, Kṛṣṇa saṅge ācarilā  
 jāni ihā niścoy koriyā (6)

“By his *sad-amśa*, existential potency, Balarāma is known as the Lord of the universe and he merges into it in his blue form.<sup>22</sup> He performs innumerable pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. Know this for sure!”

### Commentary:

By his power in *sad-amśa*, Balarāma is the lord of the universe. In the explanation of this verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura reveals this fact, *nīla-varṇa rūpe misāiyā*; he merges into it in his blue form. The body effulgence of Kṛṣṇa is shining blue and this is also the colour of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa.

Baladeva Candra expands himself in three forms; Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. Then again for the sake of creation, he expands himself, as Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the four armed Nārāyaṇa, who is the creator of the material world and the maintainer of the universe. It is in this form that Balarāma has his own blue complexion. Brahmā prayed to Kṛṣṇa in the *Brahmā-vimohana-līlā*:

naumīḍya te ‘bhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya  
 guṇjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya  
 vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-viṣṇa-veṇu-  
 lakṣma-śriye mṛdu-pade paśupāṅgajāya

Brahmā said: “My dear Lord, you are the only worshipable Supreme Lord, and therefore I offer my humble *praṇāms* and prayers just to please you. O son of the king of cowherds, your transcendental body is dark blue like a rain cloud. Your garment is brilliant like lightning and the beauty of your face is enhanced by your gunja earrings and the peacock feather on your head. Wearing garlands of various forest flowers and leaves, equipped with a herding stick, a buffalo horn, and a flute, you stand beautifully with a morsel of food in your hand.” (SB 10.14.1)

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<sup>22</sup> The *rasika* explanation is that Balarāma has painted the sky blue out his enchantment with Kṛṣṇa’s complexion. The *tattvic* explanation is that he expands into Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, and since Saṅkarṣaṇa’s form is blue, the term *nīla-varṇa rūpe* has been used here.

He glorified Kṛṣṇa, sarcastically addressing him as ‘*abhra-vapuṣe*’, the one with a cloud-like body effulgence. Brahmā’s egoistic approach disappointed Kṛṣṇa, so he refused to reveal his original form to him. He acted like an ordinary cowherd boy and ignored him. When Brahmā started offering prayers to him, Kṛṣṇa asked, “Oh Brahmā! Why should you, who are the four-headed Bhagavān, offer prayers to a simple cowherd boy like me? Maybe you have mistaken me for Nārāyaṇa, by seeing this bluish body complexion of mine.” This is another proof that Nārāyaṇa also has this same bluish body complexion.

Coming back to the verse, *kṛṣṇera yoteko līlā, kṛṣṇa saṅge ācarilā*, Balarāma is always present with Kṛṣṇa in all the sweet pastimes. Without Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa is in a helpless situation. Whenever he needs love or power, or when he is performing any kind of activity, Balarāma is always with him.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is now slowly entering into the astounding truth and mood of Balarāma. In the preceding verses, he revealed that the bluish complexion of Kṛṣṇa is also part of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva. So, we know that Balarāma has his own blue complexion form just like Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa. Here, he begins to explain Balarāma’s original mood and body complexion.

śveta-varṇa tanu yei, rohinī nandana sei  
nīla paṭṭa vastra paridhāna  
kṛṣṇera agaraja nāma, mahāprabhu balarāma  
goṣṭha krīdā nāyaka pradhāna (7)

“The son of Rohiṇī has a white complexion, and is always dressed in blue silken attire. He is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa and is known as Mahāprabhu Balarāma. he is the leader in the cow herding pastimes.”

### Commentary:

Balarāma has his own body complexion, *śukla-varṇa*, very fair. In *vraja-līlā*, he is known as Rohini-nandana, the son of mother Rohini. He is dressed in blue-silken attire. His favourite colour is royal blue. *kṛṣṇera agaraja nāma, mahāprabhu Balarāma*, he is Kṛṣṇa’s elder brother known as Mahāprabhu Balarāma. While playing in the pastimes in the *goṣṭha-līlā* in the meadows, he is *nāyaka-pradhāna*, a leader. He has a senior position as Rājākuma and as Kṛṣṇa’s elder brother. Everyone is subordinate to him and whatever he says is like a command which is submissively followed by everyone. All the cowherd boys follow his instructions and ideas during the

cow-herding pastimes. Baladeva Candra guides and instructs them as to which direction they should go in the forest, before they start their journey.

In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is mentioned that the demons, like Aghāsura and Bakāsura, etc., actually desired to be killed by Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma was giving them a chance to get Kṛṣṇa's blessings by arranging for pastimes close to places where the demons were waiting. Demons know that it is a blessing to be killed by Kṛṣṇa, as they will be easily liberated and attain *siddha-loka*. Two kinds of people attain *siddha-loka*: those who perform very dedicated *sādhana* in *jñāna-marga* and the others are the demons killed by Kṛṣṇa and his *avatārs*. Baladeva Candra creates all these *līlās*. Kṛṣṇa has no knowledge of which *līlā* is going to take place. Although he is Svayam Bhagavān and is *sarvajña*, all-knowing, while performing *līlās*, he becomes covered by His Yogamāyā potency.

It is mentioned in Caitanya-Caritāmṛta that Kṛṣṇa and his associates in *mādhurya-rasa* know that they are eternal associates. But when they appear in Bhauma Vṛndāvana, at the time of performing pastimes, both parties are oblivious of their eternal relationship. Yogamāyā creates this forgetfulness. Kṛṣṇa does not know all the arrangements that Yogamāyā and Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa make for facilitating the *līlās*.

śukla varṇa kalevara, vanamālā ratnākara  
eka karṇe ratana kuṇḍale  
ratna simhāsanopara, tribhaṅga śṛṅga pāṇidhara  
gopī yūtha saṅge kutūhole (8)

“His white body is decorated with a *vanamālā* garland and jewels. He wears a jewelled earring on one ear. He stands on a jewelled *simhāsana* with a threefold bent posture holding a horn in His hands. He happily enjoys playing in the company of His *gopī* friends.”

### Commentary:

In his white complexion body, Balarāma decorates himself with a *vanamālā*, a garland of flowers collected from the forest. Kṛṣṇa has no desire to wear so many jewelled ornaments, but Balarāma likes jewellery. The *sakhās* enjoy decorating Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with ornaments made from beautiful flowers, which they collect from the forest. Balarāma likes both flowers and jewelled ornaments, *ratnākara*, and sometimes he likes to be without any decoration.

We find a similar mood in Nityānanda Prabhu. Sometimes he decorates himself with so many golden ornaments, blue silken *dhotis* and *chādars*, and at other times he throws away everything. Nitāicand and Balarāma have the same mood; they are *premika*, full of *prema-rasa*. They are not aware of what actions manifest from within them out of their *prema*.

At any moment, they can exhibit any kind of loving mood. We have to accept all of their variegated nature without discrimination. In Vṛndāvana, there is a temple of Kala Dauji. He has a dark complexion, like Kṛṣṇa, and holds a *pan-patra*, which means he is drinking *soma-rasa*. He is always displaying contradictory moods. Sometimes he is full of opulence and sometimes he is renounced. One moment he will be dressed with many ornaments and at another moment he will throw away everything, even his clothes. In *vraja-līlā*, Balarāma used to exhibit these contrary moods. He likes to wear *makara-kunḍala* (dolphin-shaped earrings) only in one ear, either in the right or the left. The *sakhās* also like to decorate Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with one earring. Sometimes they decorate their ears with flowers. This is mentioned in a *śloka* from Veṇu-Gītā:

barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ  
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vajjayanṭīm ca mālām  
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-Vṛndāir  
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada Rāmaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

“Śyāmasundara is entering the forest of Vṛndāvana accompanied by His cowherd boyfriends. He wears a peacock feather in His turban, a yellow *karṇikāra* flower on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold, and a heart-stealing multicoloured garland strung with five kinds of fragrant forest flowers. Thus He displays His form as the greatest of dancers and the topmost expert in amorous love. The nectar of His lips flows through the holes of the flute and thus the glorious vibrations of His flute-song echo throughout the forest groves. Singing His glories, the cowherd boys follow from behind. In this way, Śrī Vṛndāvana-Dhāma, which is more charming than Vaikuṇṭha, becomes delighted by the touch of His lotus feet. (SB 10.21.5 Veṇu-Gītā)

*Karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ*; *karṇayoḥ* is in the dual case and *karṇikāraṁ* is singular. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa plays jokes with the *sakhās* when they offer him only one *karṇikā* flower for decorating his ears. If the friends offer him flowers in the left ear, he asks them: “How do I look?” They answer: “Very beautiful.” Then he places the flower on the right ear and again asks: “How

do I look now?” They reply: “Even more beautiful!” Then again, he shifts the flower to the other ear and asks, “How do I look?” The *sakhās* are surprised to see the increasing sweetness in him and are not able to give any answer, they just say: “Oh, Kṛṣṇa! We can’t describe your beauty. We can feel and realize it, but cannot express it through words.” They then take Kṛṣṇa to the pond to see his own reflection in the water, so that he can see how he looks. They do not have words to describe his beauty. Baladeva Candra and Kṛṣṇa like to wear one earring on either ear; that is the meaning of *eka karṇe ratana kuṇḍale*.

*Ratna simhāsanopara, tribaṅga śṛṅga pāṇidhara*, Balarāma stands on a jewelled throne in a thrice-bent form like Kṛṣṇa. In his hand, in place of a flute, he has *simha*, a horn, and he enjoys the company of his own group of *gopīs*, *gopī yūtha saṅge kutūhole*. In *vraja-līlā*, Balarāma also has his own group of *gopīs*, just like Kṛṣṇa. Since he is the elder brother, he does not show this side of himself in front of his younger brother. In the scriptures, it is mentioned that Balarāma performs his *rāsa-līlā* at his own place, at Balarāma *ghāṭa* or Rāma *ghāṭa*. Just like Kṛṣṇa, he performs his own *rāsa-līlā* in all seasons like Vasanta and Śārada.

Next, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains the surprising truth about the meaning of his name Balarāma.

rā-kāre śrīmatī rādhā ma-kāre madhusūdanah  
dvayor vigraha saṁyogād rāma nāma bhavet kila (9)

“The syllable ‘*rā*’ stands for Śrīmatī Rādhā, and the syllable ‘*ma*’ stands for Madhusūdana. This indicates that Balarāma (Rāma) is the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” (Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād)

### Commentary:

In the name Rāma’ there are two forms. It is the combined form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. All the while we have only heard that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the combined form of both. Here in this verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura reveals the astonishing truth that Balarāma is the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In his name the ‘*rā*’ refer to Rādhā and the ‘*ma*’ to Madhusūdana. These two syllables makes the word Rāma.

‘Bala’ means powerful, not just by prowess, but by prema, as he is the storehouse of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. He is more powerful than Kṛṣṇa also, because Kṛṣṇa is not able to do anything without him. If Kṛṣṇa wants to bless someone, he needs Balarāma. If Kṛṣṇa wants to enjoy with Rādhārāṇī and



other *gopīs*, he needs Balarāma with him. Even when Kṛṣṇa wants to kill any demon, he cannot do so without Balarāma. We think we worship Kṛṣṇa to attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* in our heart, but if we go directly to Kṛṣṇa, he cannot give us his own prema or knowledge of his own *tattva*.

Brahmā said to Kṛṣṇa: “Oh Prabhu, I have understood the truth as to how one can attain your blessings and your prema. I can never get it directly from you. Your prema, your blessings and your service, everything that you can give us, is in your heart. But your heart is not with you, it is with your pure devotees. You only have your form, but your heart is with your devotees. So, I need your devotees; it is only by their blessings that I can attain you.”

jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva  
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhāvadīya-vārtām  
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir  
ye prāyaśo ‘jita jito ‘py asi tais tri-lokyaṁ

“Decisively giving up all intellectual attempts to understand the Supreme Truth, those who want to realise You, should completely surrender unto You. They should hear from self-realised devotees about Your holy name and transcendental pastimes. Whatever situation they may find themselves in, they should progress by fully dedicating their mind, body, and words to You. In this way the infinite, who is never conquered by anyone, becomes conquered through love.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.3)

*San-mukharitām* means, “from your devotees.” “It is you that I need, but I will not come to you directly. I will enquire about you from your devotees who are protecting you and taking care of you. They know everything about you. I will not ask you because you do not have knowledge about yourself. If I need any knowledge and realisation about you, then I will seek shelter of your devotees, not you.”

sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir  
ye prāyaśo ‘jita jito ‘py asi tais tri-lokyaṁ

“First, I will receive blessings and instructions about your *bhajana* from your devotee, and that means from Śrī guru. Staying fixed in one place, I will follow all his instructions in three ways: by action, mind and speech. By

performing my *sādhana* in this manner, I won't have to search for you because you are bound to come to me and offer me whatever I need.”

This is the truth and reality about *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā*. If we want *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā*, then we need to please his pure devotees and Śrī Gurudeva. *guru-kṛpā* is *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā*. When our guru is pleased with us, then we must know that Kṛṣṇa is also pleased with us.

śaraṇa lañā kare kṛṣṇe ātma-samarpaṇa  
kṛṣṇa tāre kare tat-kāle ātma-sama

“When a devotee fully surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, Kṛṣṇa accepts him as one of His confidential associates.” (CC Madhya 22.102)

Our worship and goal is Kṛṣṇa. In the beginning of our spiritual life, we have to take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī guru. The moment we take shelter of gurudeva, Kṛṣṇa will accept us as his own nearest and dearest one. That is why the scriptures say that we have to respect our guru as Nitāi. Without Nitāi, Saṅkarṣaṇa or Balarāma’s *kṛpā*, no one can attain *guru-kṛpā*. We will only be able to realize Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva if we can see Nitāi in our guru.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says in his verse, *dvayor vighraha saṁyogād*: when these two forms, Rādhā and Madhusūdana, combine and unite, this is the ultimate truth about Balarāma-tattva. From these two forms, the name “Rāma” has appeared.

rā-kāre rādhikotpanna, ma-kare madhusūdana  
dui nāma ubhaya vighraha  
tāhāte ye rasotpatti, atyanta ānanda tathi  
rāma nāma niścoy jāniho (10)

“From the syllable rā, Rādhikā appears, and from ma Madhusūdana. By the union of these two names, Balarāma manifested. The pure bliss that manifests in their hearts during union, know for sure is none other than Balarāma.” (Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvād)

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura elaborates further on the previous *śloka* in a much more relishable way. Balarāma manifested from the union of Rādhikā and Madhusūdana. *tāhāte ye rasotpatti*; when Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī meet each other and perform their secret pastimes, the *ānanda*, pure bliss that manifests

from their hearts is Balarāma. Through the presence of Balarāma, they derive pleasure from each other when they meet and play in their secret love pastimes. They relish *ānanda* through Balarāma, who creates their pleasure with his invisible form. In the confidential pastimes, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa functions with his power without any form. He is playing in their heart, so they can please each other. For their meeting and pastimes, they need prema. Where do they get this prema from? They get it from Balarāma, who is the storekeeper of prema. He spreads love into their hearts, and they enjoy great pleasure in each other's company. Bliss keeps increasing in their hearts and this *ānanda* is non-other than Balarāma. He is known as Balarāma by the combination of two potencies: love – '*rāma*' and power – '*bala*'. The combination of love and power is Balarāma.

sarva kārye balarāma, Baladeva hoy nāma  
balabhadra śabdete maṅgala  
saṅkarṣaṇa yei nāma, ākarṣaṇa vidyā dhāma  
budha jana balae sakala (11)

“All the activities performed by any one of these personalities with these names: Balarāma, Baladeva, or Balabhadra, are indeed all-auspicious. The name Saṅkarṣaṇa attracts the abode of knowledge. This is the verdict of all saintly Vaiṣṇavas.”

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura is glorifying Balarāma's different names. Whenever we meditate upon any one of his names, be it Balarāma, Balabhadra or Baladeva, or if we chant or meditate on these forms, all auspiciousness will come to us. Just by the power of his name, all inauspiciousness is destroyed and prema is bestowed.

To taste, to feel, to realise and to maintain *kṛṣṇa-prema*, we must have the capacity (eligibility), otherwise we will not be able to comprehend this prema. Our heart has to be very pure; *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam*, devoid of any material desires. If our mind is constantly meditating upon him, our tongue always chanting his name and every limb of our body is always engaged with activities connected to Kṛṣṇa, we will attain pure prema very soon. We will feel the presence of Kṛṣṇa everywhere. Unfortunately in this material world, mostly everyone is always searching for trivial happiness.

Śrī Prankṛṣṇa Bābājī's favourite story, "Māyā Sankara," is a very nice example of the *jīva*'s forgetfulness of their eternal happiness while enjoying the flickering happiness of this world:

There was once a man travelling by foot from his village. By noon, he was in the forest and stopped to have his lunch. He was sitting very close to a well, which was full of poisonous creatures like snakes and scorpions, even the water was poisonous. If anyone fell into this well, there is no chance for survival. He sat next to this well and started having his lunch. Suddenly he heard the roar of a lion and saw it approaching him. In his haste to escape from the lion, he jumped into the well and he was trapped with all the poisonous creatures in the well. He was caught in a terrible predicament; inside or outside the well his life was in the jaws of death. The well was very old and there were lots of creepers growing in it. There was also the root of a banyan tree protruding inside the well. He quickly caught hold of that root. Thus, he was hanging in between the lion above him, and poisonous creatures below him. On the banyan tree above his head was a beehive from which drops of honey trickled out and dripped into his mouth. Upon tasting it, he started relishing the drops of honey. He held firmly onto the root of the tree, and opened his mouth to catch the drops of honey. While enjoying the delicious taste of honey, he forgot the dangerous situation that he was in, that death was waiting to devour him. Soon, he noticed two rats chewing the root that he was holding onto. One was black and the other white. He realised that if the rats continued to chew into the root, it would soon give way, and he would fall into the well, wherein the poisonous creatures would kill him. Desperately he called out to Bhagavān: "Oh Bhagavān, please save me!" After a while, Bhagavān appeared and asked him, how he had managed to hold onto the root of the tree for so long. He could have called out much sooner. The man replied: "I forgot the danger that I was in while enjoying the taste of the delicious honey. The moment I saw the mice chewing the root that I was holding onto, I panicked and only then I remembered you."

This is our condition. We are always living in a world of fantasy. We keep dreaming and holding on to false hopes. The black and white rats signify day and night and they are chewing on our precious time. By the day and night our time is passing by, wasted on enjoying trivial pleasures, forgetting our eternal position and goal. The tiny drops of honey are like the flickering happiness we get to enjoy in this material world, which comes and goes. We know it will never last, just as the honeycomb does not supply honey eternally. The supply of honey will come to an end one day, but we

still do not give up the desire for temporary enjoyment. We hang on to false happiness which does not last forever.

The lion signifies our six enemies: *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *mātsarya*. These enemies are always driving us to get entangled in material pleasure. The poisonous creatures in the well signify the darkness of ignorance. How is it possible that we can still live in the darkness of ignorance after hearing the knowledge from the scriptures about our true identity and reality? We repeatedly hear spiritual discourses reminding us of our true nature and yet we keep getting attached to trivial pleasures of this world.

Through our *bhajana*, we first have to develop the consciousness that we should live within this world just as a drop of water lies on a lotus petal. We may be surrounded by all the material pleasures of this world, but we must always be alert, lest we get attached to such pleasures. We have to remain detached at all times. We have to accept everything that comes into our life, but we must be cautious not to get attached. If we accept something habitually, that will soon become an attachment and become a part of our nature permanently.

By Saṅkarṣaṇa's *kṛpā* we can get this realization. *Saṅkarṣaṇa yei nāma, ākarṣaṇa vidyā dhāma*: He who is the creator of all knowledge is the only one who can destroy the darkness of our ignorance and enlighten us with the supreme knowledge of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

Devādi Deva Mahādeva is describing all these truths to Devī Pārvatī. Mahādeva is the greatest Vaiṣṇava: *Vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*. He is always revealing principles and giving us guidance in *bhakti*, especially revealing Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa-*tattva* to everyone. This is his duty. He was once questioned by Pārvatī Devī: "Oh Śambhu, why are you always meditating on Kṛṣṇa, and advising everyone about *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*? By practicing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, what will one achieve in life?"

Mahādeva replied: "O Devī, one can attain everything through *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, including *aṣṭa-siddhis*, *mukti* and *bhukti*. But Devī, do you know why we actually practice *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*? It is not for *siddhis*, *mukti* or *bhukti*, but for *nityam ca paramānandam bhaved govinda-bhaktitah*; to experience *ānanda* in our hearts. It is always increasing with ever new bliss, so there is no way one can be bored with this *ānanda*. There are no words to describe this eternal bliss; it is never ending. That is why I am practicing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and advising others to do so as well."

Next, Mahādeva explains another astonishing truth about Balarāma to Pārvatī Devī.

aparaṁ paramāścaryaṁ śṛṇu devī varānane  
sadānandāṁśayor yogād balarāmo vabhūva ha (12)

“Listen, O fair-faced Devī Pārvatī! There is another astonishing truth about Balarāma. He is not only the *sat* [existential] potency but also the *ānanda* [pleasure-giving potency] of Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma manifested from the union of these two potencies [also called *sandhinī* and *hlādinī*] and is serving Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa through both.” (Śrī Dharanī-Śeṣa Samvāda)

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura reveals what Devādi Deva Mahādeva, the topmost Vaiṣṇava, told Pārvatī Devī regarding another amazing truth about Balarāma and his *śakti-svarūpa*, Anaṅga Mañjarī. He is not only the *sat*-potency of Kṛṣṇa, but simultaneously he is also the *ānanda*-potency of Kṛṣṇa. To give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa, he separated himself from Kṛṣṇa. Then he expanded himself into masculine and feminine forms with innumerable moods. He is serving Kṛṣṇa in a male form and simultaneously in a female form. Whenever he is with Kṛṣṇa and the *sakhās*, he is in the male form as Balarāma, standing beside Kṛṣṇa on his right side, in *sakhya-bhāva* and *vātsalya-bhāva*. Whenever he has to control Kṛṣṇa, he exercises his parental mood.

sad ānanda svabhāvete, kṛṣṇa-candra sukha dite  
prthak līlā kore kṛṣṇa saṅge  
ānandāṁśe rādhā bhāva, yukta hoy baladeva  
pīta varṇa tanu dhare raṅge (13)

“The *sat* and *ānanda* potencies naturally give bliss to Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma plays pastimes with Kṛṣṇa in every *līlā* with various moods, in the *ānanda* aspect, Balarāma accepts Rādhā’s *bhāva* and takes on a yellow complexion.”

### Commentary:

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura is revealing yet another very astonishing confidential truth about Saṅkarṣaṇa-*tattva*. First he says, Balarāma separated himself from Kṛṣṇa to play different roles, as a very pure servant, friend and as a beloved all at the same time. Then he says, *ānandāṁśe rādhā bhāva*, which means that Balarāma is also Rādhā, the eternal *śakti* of Kṛṣṇa. How is it possible for Balarāma to manifest the mood of Rādhārāṇī? When the *hlādinī-śakti* and the *sandhinī-śakti*, both these potencies of Kṛṣṇa are fully present in Balarāma, he is in full control of her mood and all the pastimes.

He can do anything and whatever he wants. All pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are fully controlled by his will. It all depends on his free will, when and which mood he wishes to manifest according to the needs of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

As Rādhā, the feminine aspect, he again manifests two forms with two separate moods: One as Rādhārāṇī, and the other as Anaṅga Mañjarī. As Anaṅga Mañjarī he has two moods: That of a maidservant and that of a beloved (*kāntā-bhāva*). Both are present in one form. When he engages himself with *ānandāmśa hlādinī-śakti*, then he has the mood of Rādhārāṇī and at that time *ānandāmśe rādhā bhāva, yukta hoy baladeva*, he becomes Rādhā, absorbed in her mood.

Then he says: *pīta varṇa tanu dhare raṅge*. Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura is describing Anaṅga Mañjarī. She has the same look and mood of Rādhārāṇī, but with a yellow complexion. Rādhārāṇī's complexion is golden; *tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi*. So here he is actually referring to Anaṅga Mañjarī. This culminates in the supreme 'Rāma Rādhā, Rādhā Rāma' *bhāva*. He will go deeper into explaining this *bhāva* in verse seventeen.

As the scriptwriter of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, Balarāma creates and plans everything. First he writes the script, and then he delegates Kātyāyanī Devī, Yogamāyā, to work out his plans. He will then ask her to keep it secret and not reveal to anyone. He instructs her: "When Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā are engaged in their *līlā*, I too have to participate in it. At that time, you have to keep me covered from all this knowledge as well. You have to then exert your full power as Yogamāyā and place a veil of forgetfulness on everyone. Kṛṣṇa will then be able to enjoy his *līlā* with full satisfaction. If he remains *sarvajña*, a knower of past, present and future, then the *līlā* will not be exciting for him." In this way he tricks Kṛṣṇa into entering his pastimes in a mood appropriate for that *līlā*.

śrī rādhā svarūpa yei, anaṅga mañjarī sei  
gūḍha rūpa śakti balarāma  
kṛṣṇa sukha hetu tāra, yoto yoto avatāra  
nitya tanu nityānanda nāma(14)

"Anaṅga Mañjarī, who is the non-different form of Śrī Rādhā, is the confidential, hidden *śakti* form of Balarāma. He appears in various incarnations for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. His eternal form is known as Nityānanda."

**Commentary:**

Although Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are in different bodies, they are similar in their expression of mood and love for Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī is Anaṅga Mañjarī, and Anaṅga Mañjarī is Rādhārāṇī. This is why; they always remain together. In the pastimes, Anaṅga Mañjarī is the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī. They serve and please Kṛṣṇa in different ways and moods. Balarāma's eternal form is known as Nityānanda, the combined form of Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī, *gūḍha rūpa śakti balarāma*. Both of them are the confidential *śakti* of Balarāma. Very few know this, as this is a transcendental secret.

*Kṛṣṇa sukha hetu tāra, yoto yoto avatāra*; Balarāma has expanded himself in different forms to serve Kṛṣṇa in various ways, but among all his different forms, his form as Nityānanda is eternal and has manifested for the sole purpose of pleasing and satisfying Kṛṣṇa eternally.

śiropālī balarāma, anaṅga mañjarī nāma  
dhari kṛṣṇa sukhera kāraṇe  
paurṇamāsī bhagavatī, tāhāra ādeśa tathi  
yogāyoga hoy viharāṇe (15)

“Balarāma, who is the ornament in the form of a crest (turban) of Kṛṣṇa, takes the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī for the sake of Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. He delegates Bhagavatī Paurṇamāsī to arrange the proper circumstances for the pastimes.”

**Commentary:**

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has referred to Balarāma, as *śiropālī* the turban, crest of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is always decorated by this crest ornament. Whenever Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa is with him, then we can say that Kṛṣṇa is decorated. When Saṅkarṣaṇa or Balarāma is not there with him, then he is practically naked, without any decoration, ornaments or clothes.

*Śiropālī balarāma, anaṅga mañjarī nāma*, that which is like the crest ornament of Kṛṣṇa is Anaṅga Mañjarī. Although she has deep love and attachment for Kṛṣṇa, she feels the pleasure of union with him just by being in the presence of Rādhārāṇī. If she is going to Kṛṣṇa privately to give him pleasure, it is only when Rādhārāṇī requests her to do so. This is a very incomprehensible special mood.

Naturally, when people are in love, they desire to be with their beloved. How can we imagine this amazing truth? In one form she is a



follower, as Anaṅga Mañjarī, and in another form she is the controller, like Rādhārāṇī. She approaches Kṛṣṇa in different forms and moods to please him in different ways. She is the supreme in the performance of her service. No one can perform *sevā* in two *bhāvas* like her. This is why we need her blessings to realize this mood, only then can we feel such prema in our *bhajana*.

*paurṇamāsī bhagavatī, tāhāra ādeśa tathi yogāyoga hoy viharāṇe*, this refers to Yogamāyā. Whenever Kṛṣṇa plays pastimes with the *gopīs* in *mādhurya-bhāva*, in parental mood and all the other *rasas*, Paurṇamāsī Bhagavatī plays a very important role in creating the proper environment.

In *śārada-rasa-līlā*, Yogamāyā served Kṛṣṇa by creating a favourable charming atmosphere. This Rāsa-līlā did not take place on the full moon day. It was enacted on the day after the full moon, during *pratipadā*, the day after *pūrṇimā*, when the *tithi* is still within *pūrṇimā*. That night is called *rakha-rajani*. Kṛṣṇa performed his Rāsa-līlā on *rakha-rajani*, the reason being that on full moon days there is some deficiency in the full moon. The moon has sixteen lunar parts. On the full moon day all these sixteen-parts do not appear, but during *pratipadā*, the day after the full moon, the moon is complete with all sixteen parts, *śola-kala*. That is why, Kṛṣṇa chose this day. He wanted everything to be perfect and the ambience to be in complete sync with the beauty of nature.

Yogamāyā Devī followed Balarāma's instructions and arranged a favourable atmosphere and environment for the *līlā*. She arranged for flowers from all seasons to bloom. During the night it is very unusual for the birds, like the peacock, and the animals, like the deer, to be out in the forest. But Yogamāyā Devī arranged for the male peacocks to dance with female peacocks, male deer to dance with female deer, bumble bees to fly together over different flowers, and so forth. The whole environment inspired Kṛṣṇa to meet with his beloveds. Nature was in full bloom; fruits and flowers of all seasons blossomed everywhere in Vṛndāvana.

The *rāsa-līlā* chapters in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam do not elaborately describe this scenario, but in the *pad-yāvalī kirtans* astonishingly detailed descriptions are sung, which delight the listeners:

śārada candra pavana manda, vipine barala kusuma ranga  
phulla malika malati yuthi mattha madhukara bhulani

Nature sleeps during the night, but on that *rakha-rajani* night it was surprising that everyone, all the animals, flowers and bumble bees, were present there in their fully awakened consciousness full of *ānanda*.

Long before that great day, Baladeva Candra had prepared the script for the *rāsa-līlā*. The change in the environment did not happen during the day time. When the day came close to an end, by nightfall, he manifested everything. Kṛṣṇa had gone out for cow-herding as usual and had just come back from the *goṣṭha-līlā* with all his friends. The beauty of nature was not like this when he had returned from the forest. Otherwise, Kṛṣṇa would have started *Rāsa-līlā* immediately when he saw all these *uddīpana-vibhāvas* (stimulants); the environment that stimulates emotions, which leads to aesthetic delight. In *rasa-śāstra* this is known as, ‘*uddīpana-vibhāva*.’ He felt this great desire, enthused by the favourable environment. *Bhagavān api tā rātrīḥ śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ*, although he is Svayam Bhagavān, seeing the exceptional charming beauty of nature on this night aroused an intense desire in his mind to meet and play with the *gopīs*. *Vikṣya rantum manas cakre*, it was Kṛṣṇa’s desire to perform the *rāsa-līlā*.

This *līlā* was meant to fulfil the promise he had made to the *gopīs* on the day of *vastra-haraṇa-līlā*. He had promised to call them, when the right moment came, to fulfil their desire to unite with him. But this time the desire just arose in his heart upon seeing the charming beauty of nature at midnight. Baladeva Candra administers all these pastimes for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure without Kṛṣṇa’s knowledge.

In the *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, the eight-fold pastimes, after Kṛṣṇa returns from *goṣṭha-līlā* (cow herding), Mā Yaśodā offers him some refreshments. She washes his face and feet and changes his clothes first and then feeds him. After that he goes to the *gośālā* (cow-shed) to milk the cows. Then he goes to *rājya-sabhā* with his father Nanda Mahārāja. All day long he was away with his friends in the forest and all the *vrajavāsīs* are anxiously waiting for him. They attend this meeting at this *rājya-sabhā* daily without fail just for Kṛṣṇa’s *darśan*. But on this day of *Rāsa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa was feeling extremely tired. He could not even take his meal and fell asleep on the lap of Yaśodā Mā. Seeing how exhausted he was, Yaśodā Mā sent a messenger to the *rājya-sabhā* to inform everyone that Kṛṣṇa would not be able to attend the meeting that night. She then carried Kṛṣṇa upstairs to the *candra-śalaka*, terrace room, and laid him gently on the bed. She cautioned everyone not to disturb his sleep and forbade them to speak loudly.

Did this happen by Kṛṣṇa’s will? No! Everything happened by Balarāma, Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa’s arrangements and plans. He ordered

Yogamāyā to hypnotise Kṛṣṇa to make him tired and retire to bed early. He has to perform strenuous activities of singing and dancing later for the whole night in Rāsa-līlā. So, Yogamāyā cast her hypnotising spell over Kṛṣṇa, and he fell asleep. Later he woke up when everyone was asleep. Upon waking up, the first thing he looked at was the moon. He was surprised to see such a bright moon. Strolling out on to the terrace of his room, he was even more amazed to see the charming beauty of Vṛndāvana bathed in the moonlight. On that night Vṛndāvana was showered by the rays of two bright moons. One was the moon in the sky and the other was Kṛṣṇa Candra. The moon-rays shower special nectar, *sudha*, on which the tiny *cakora* birds survive. All the *vraja-vadhus*, the *gopīs*, were like the *cakora* birds waiting anxiously to drink the nectar from the rays of Kṛṣṇa Candra's moon-like face.

During their meeting in Kurukṣetra the *gopīs* sung this *śloka*:

āhuś ca te nalina-nābha padāravindam  
yogeśvarair hr̥dī vicintyam agādha-bodhaiḥ  
saṁsāra-kūpa-patitottaraṇāvalambam  
gehaṁ juṣāṁ api manasy udiyāt sadā naḥ

“O Kamala-nābha (You whose navel is like a lotus), great *yogīs* who possess profound intelligence meditate upon Your lotus feet in their hearts. Your lotus feet are the only means of escape for those who have fallen into the dark well of material existence. O Lord, please give us the benediction that, even when we perform household work, Your lotus feet shall always reside in our hearts and we shall never forget them, even for a moment.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.82.48)

In the commentaries on this *śloka* by Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, it is mentioned that Kṛṣṇa invited the *gopīs* to Dvārakā and he told them: “Now I have everything. I am a powerful king and I have the position and ability to take care of all of you.”

The *gopīs* replied: “Oh Kṛṣṇa! We are so foolish, that we forgot you are a great king now. Certainly, you must have so much wealth, that you can provide all the material needs of poor village cowherd women, like us. But did we ever request you for anything for our material welfare? We are ready to leave everything; we are ready to sacrifice everything and everyone, our relatives, home, family members and our friends, only for your prema.”

“O Kṛṣṇa! Don't you remember that upon hearing your flute call, we left everything and came running to you hastily to join you in Rāsa-līlā? Heartlessly you reminded us about the duties of chaste married women and

told us to return home to our husbands and family members and our responsibilities. Do you remember what we told you then?"

The *gopīs* said to Kṛṣṇa:

pati-sutānvaya-bhrāṭṛ-bāndhavān  
ativilaṅghya te 'nty acyutāgatāḥ  
gati-vidas tavodgīta-mohitāḥ  
kitava yoṣitaḥ kas tyajen niśi

"O Acyuta, we have come to You, having rejected our husbands, sons, brothers, friends, and our entire family. O cheater, You know very well why we came here. We have come, bewitched by the loud song of Your flute. Who but You would abandon young ladies who have come to You alone in the night?" (SB 10.31.16)

"At that moment we revealed our love, attachment and surrender to you. Do you know we abandoned everyone, our *pati*, husbands, and *sūta*, children (they never had any children of their own, as they were never touched by their husbands. They mentioned *sūta*, as these were all the sons of others whom they loved dearly as their own). They abandoned these children as well. *Bhrāṭṛ*, even our brothers and brothers-in-law were all rejected by us. *Ānaya*, including all our other relationships, such as our relatives who are attached to us, we left everything. We took this vow, that we will never accept them again. We confessed the truth to you, but you have forgotten our sacrifice and our unconditional surrender to you. Are you now offering us that which we have abandoned long ago?"

"How strange that you have forgotten our love and attachment to you which was far above anything else. But let us tell you something, we will only accept you again if you come back to Vṛndāvana. We are all like the chaste *cakora* birds. We are very soft and simple hearted. We can stay alive just by staring at the *sudha*, moon-rays of our Kṛṣṇa Candra. Our pain is that our Kṛṣṇa Candra is now in Dvārakā, eclipsed from Vṛndāvana. O Kṛṣṇa! We can still remain alive by waiting like the *cakora* birds to drink the *sudha* moon rays of Kṛṣṇa Candra when He will rise again in the Vṛndāvana sky. The rising sky for Kṛṣṇa Candra is in Vṛndāvana, not Dvārakā. We will not accept this Kṛṣṇa of Dvārakā, because in Dvārakā is the 'Kṛṣṇa sun' not the 'Kṛṣṇa moon'. We cannot tolerate the scorching of the sun. It is the moon rays that nourish us and keep us alive with their *sudha*-nectar."

The vraja-gopīs are all like *cakora* birds. They wait in their own homes to hear the call of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. At that time their hearts beat like the turbulent ocean. During the full moon night, the waves in the ocean become high and stormy due to the pulling effect of the full moon. The same thing happens to the *vraja-gopīs*’ hearts by the power of Kṛṣṇa Candra. Their hearts beat like the turbulent waves, and they become maddened in the height of their prema. They run to him in self-forgetfulness. All these intense moods of prema are created by Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. In this way the meeting of Kṛṣṇa Candra and Rādhārāṇī with all the *gopīs* was arranged by Yogamāyā on the order of Balarāma.

hlādinī śakti rūpo’yaṁ rāmaś ca rādhikā svayam  
prakṛta puṁ svarūpaś ca triguṇātīta īśvaraḥ (16)

“The *hlādinī-śakti* aspect of Balarāma is Rādhikā herself, but he has a male form and is the Lord beyond all the three guṇas.” (Rasa Kalpasāra)

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura now directly mentions that this *hlādinī ānandāṁśa* of Baladeva Candra is Rādhikā herself. In his female form he is pleasing Kṛṣṇa by his own mood. The mood of Rādhārāṇī and the mood of Anaṅga Mañjarī are not exactly the same. They are the same only in the elementary stage. When Rādhārāṇī enters into the higher stage of *mahabhāva*, like *citra-jalpa-daśa*, no one is able to control Rādhārāṇī; not even Kṛṣṇa or the *sakhīs*. When Rādhārāṇī enters this stage, it is only possible for her to control herself in the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī. No one else can do it. This is the reason why: Anaṅga Mañjarī is always there with Rādhārāṇī in the special mood of a *dāsī*. She has to serve Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa in their pastimes, especially Rādhārāṇī. As she is the one who administers all the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, only she is able to control the mood, the waves and the flow of Rādhārāṇī’s *mahabhāva-prema*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura emphasizes the fact that in the statement *rāmaś ca rādhikā svayam*, Rāma means the feminine supreme lover. His female form is Rādhikā herself. It is not Balarāma, the male aspect. Then he goes on to explain *prakṛta puṁ svarūpaś ca triguṇātīta īśvaraḥ*, at the same time he has also a male form and he is beyond all the three *guṇas*: the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* of this material world.

Although he is beyond all three *guṇas*, he does accept positions in these *guṇas*, such as Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is purely a *sattva-svarūpa-murti*. He is known as Vasudeva. He is endowed fully with the qualities of

pure *sattva-guṇa*; *sattvaṁ viśuddham vasudeva-śabditam* (pure goodness is beyond the *guṇas*).

Here in this world, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara take their positions in three material *guṇas*. Viṣṇu is in *sattva-guṇa*, Brahmā in *raja-guṇa* and Śiva in *tama-guṇa*. So, by his male form, which is *tri-guṇātīt*, Balarāma is creating, maintaining and playing pastimes in all the universes.

rādhā rāma rasa kūpa, ānaṅga mañjarī svarūpa  
rāma rādhā anaṅga mañjarī  
śakti rūpa tāratamya, jāniho rasera marma,  
kṛṣṇa sukhe sadāi vihari (17)

“When Rādhā combines with Rāma, she submerges in the well of *rasa* and appears as Anaṅga Mañjarī. When Rāma merges with Rādhā, he also appears as Anaṅga Mañjarī. These two different aspects of his *śakti*, which appear in two forms, are actually the same, appearing in different moods for the sake of giving pleasure to Kṛṣṇa in his pastimes.”

### Commentary:

Here Rāmāi Thākura explains the stage, when the male and female aspects are adjectives of each other. Here, they are two personalities with two moods. One is Rādhā-Rāma and the other is Rāma-Rādhā. Sometimes Rādhā enhances Rāma and sometimes Rāma enhances Rādhā. When Rādhikā, who as the supreme lover, enhances the mood of Rāma, he will be submerged in *rasa-kūpa*, a well of *rasa*. That well of *rasa* then takes the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī, the embodiment of all *rasas*. When Rāma enhance Rādhā, this form is also Anaṅga Mañjarī. Both these forms, “Rādhā-Rāma” and “Rāma-Rādhā” culminate into one, and that is Anaṅga Mañjarī.

[Commentary by Ācārya Nishit Kūmar Gosvāmī:]

This following commentary was explained by my *śikṣā guru* Ācārya Nishit Kumar Gosvāmī. I am very fortunate I had such a great renowned scholar as my *śikṣā guru*. I will try to explain his commentary without deviating from it with my own speculations.

He explained that Śrī Balarāma is the *sandhinī-śakti* of Svayam Bhagavān, the source of the Lord’s *śuddha-sattva cit* potency, which reigns as Saṅkarṣaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha. He is the Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa-*tattva*, the original Saṅkarṣaṇa principle. This Balarāma is not to be mistaken as the Rāma mentioned in this verse, *rādhā rāma rasa kūpa, ānaṅga mañjarī svarūpa*,

here Rāmāi Ṭhākura refers to Rāma who is the supreme lover: *rāmana karta rāmate iti rāma*. The *bhāva* that is revealed within the meaning of the *padyānuvāda* of this verse shows that Rāma has two roles, one as Rādhā-Rāma and the other is Rāma-Rādhā.

In the first, “Rādhā-Rāma” Rādhikā enhances Rāma. By Rādhikā’s mercy we can realize the mood of Rāma who is the store-keeper of divine love – *kṛṣṇa-prema*; *rāmana karta* is he who is creating everything for Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with the *gopīs*.

In the second pair, “Rāma-Rādhā,” it is Rāma who enhances Rādhā. When Rāma is the special feature of Śrī Rādhā, he is captivated by Rādhā’s mood and is submerged in a *rasa-kūpa*, well or storehouse of *rasa*. At this stage Rāma is covered with Rādhārāṇī’s *bhāva*. When Rādhārāṇī wants to extend her service to Kṛṣṇa in a different mood, then the mood of Rāma emerges in her and she transforms into the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī. She will then appear in front of Kṛṣṇa to offer him pleasure in a different mood.

Without Rādhikā’s help, Rāma is unable to attract the world with transcendental *rati*. Here he used the word *rati* to express the highest stage of union in love. The *purva-rāga-daśa* is the feeling of love prior to meeting. The moments before the lover and the beloved meet each other. Both of them will feel deep longing and attachment in their heart for each other.

ratir yā saṅgamāt pūrvam darśana-śravaṇādi-jā  
tayor unmīlati prājñaiḥ pūrva-rāgaḥ sa ucyate

“That love born from seeing, hearing, or other kinds of contact before the couple have actually met is called *pūrva-rāga* by the wise.” (UN 15.5)

This mood is experienced before the meeting by eye contact, by exchange of words or by feeling a desire to be together. At this stage of *pūrva-rāga* there will be some shyness, loving attachment from a distance, some tension and restlessness. This love is not yet considered the deepest love. Finally, these feelings of the *pūrva-rāga-daśa* will conclude in a strong desire for union. This union is the appearance of the final stage of *rati*. This is when Śrī Rādhikā’s power and *bhāva* unites with Rāma, covering him and enhancing his attributes. He is then capable of attracting all the three worlds in transcendental *rati*. Thus, Rāma’s *prema-rati* becomes *rādhāmāyā* when he completely loses himself by her influence (contact). When these two forms merge into each other, he forgets his male form. When Rāma is totally covered with the mood of Śrī Rādhikā, he will not only forget, but lose

everything of his male form. Thus he appears in his female form, as Anaṅga Mañjarī.

On the other hand, when Śrī Rādhā is influenced by Rāma (Rāma-Rādhā), she transforms to *rāmamayi*, overwhelmed by transcendental *prema-rati*. When Rādhā becomes very eager to satisfy Kṛṣṇa with the mood of *anaṅga-sevā*, this desire takes a separate form, and Anaṅga Mañjarī offers herself for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. This same Rāma, when he assumes the role of a friend with parental love and stands on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's right side, he is Śrī Balarāma. When his *cit* potency merges into Rādhā's *hlādinī* potency, this energy fuses into Kṛṣṇa's *saccidānanda-svarūpa*; then the Śrutis declare *śakti-śaktimator abheda*, when *śakti* and *śaktiman* unite in oneness. [Thus ends the commentary of Ācārya Nishit Kumar Gosvāmī]

We are very fortunate to have the *śakti-śaktimator abheda svarūpa* in Kali-yuga in the form of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Worshipping the *śakti* means simultaneously worshipping the *śaktiman*. This is why we should always worship Kṛṣṇa with Rādhārāṇī. Without Rādhārāṇī we cannot worship Kṛṣṇa.

However, for the worship of Śrīman Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, we do not need Lakṣmī Priya or Viṣṇu Priya with him. This is a unique situation. In all his previous *avatāras*, *śakti* and *śaktiman* were two separate male and female forms. In Satya-yuga, Nārāyaṇa is worshipped with Lakṣmī Devī. In Treta-yuga, Prabhu Rāmacandra is with Sita Devī. In Dvāpara-yuga, worship of Kṛṣṇa is not complete without Rādhārāṇī. But Śrīman Mahāprabhu's worship in Kali-yuga is the simplest worship of Rādhā-Govinda as one.

*Śakti* and *śaktiman* are both in one form, appearing as Gaurasundara Mahāprabhu in Kali-yuga:

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād  
ekātmānāv api bhuvi purā deha-bhedam gatau tau  
cāitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dvayam caikyam āptam  
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam

“Śrīmatī Rādhikā is Kṛṣṇa's *hlādinī-śakti* (pleasure giving potency) and the embodiment of the transformation of His *praṇaya* (intimate love). Since They are *eka-ātma-svarūpa* (one soul), She is intrinsically non-different from Kṛṣṇa and one in identity with Him. However, to enjoy the transcendental pleasure of Their loving pastimes, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have eternally manifested Themselves in these two apparently separate forms. Now these



two transcendental identities, *sevyā* and *sevāka*, *viṣaya-tattva* and *āśraya-tattva*, have manifested in one *svarūpa* as Śrī Caitanya *tattva*. I repeatedly bow down to Śacīnandana, who is the *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa adorned with the *bhāva* and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” (CC Ādi līlā 1.5)

Both of them, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā, appeared in Kali-yuga, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They were two forms, but now they have combined as one. Their union is *akhyam prakatam*, two forms, two moods and two bodies in one form. People in Kali-yuga are very fortunate to have Śrīman Mahāprabhu. By taking shelter of his lotus feet, we get the blessings of both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. Gaurāṅga Sundara is the most enchanting, merciful and compassionate combination of the two supreme powers, the masculine and feminine, in one form for the worship of the fortunate Kali-yuga *jīvas*.

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura concludes the explanation of the confidential secret truth that Mahādeva revealed to Devī Pārvatī. Rāmāi Ṭhākura has now completed the *tattva* explanations of Śrī Balarāma and his female form Anaṅga Mañjarī. Although *tattva* is very important, knowing *tattva* alone is not sufficient to relish the sweetness in *rāgānuga-bhakti* which is full of *rasa*.

In the coming verses, Rāmāi Ṭhākura describes the beauty and sweetness of Anaṅga Mañjarī. These explanations must be relished in the mood of devotion. The mind must be free from any mundane concept. This is the eligibility for entry into *rāgānuga-bhajana*. It is very confidential and is not disclosed to those who are still very attached to mundane concepts. By listening to the beauty and the secret pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhikā, if any material comparison arises in the heart and mind, then it will be a great offence.

Before we start listening to these descriptions about Anaṅga Mañjarī, we must be aware of the fact that, what we are going to hear is not about just any ordinary girl from this material world. Rāmāi Ṭhākura has made comparisons of her beauty with material objects, like the vines, the mountains, the moon, etc. He has quoted poetic lines from *rasa-śāstras* describing the beauty of a young maiden to express the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī.

All the great poets of *rasa-śāstras*, like Kalidāsa, Baravi and Magha, have written explicit descriptions of the beauty of females in books like Megha-Duta and Kumara-Sambhāva. It may be possible that they had some realisations or darśan of those heavenly damsels, or they had just heard about them. In Megha-Duta, the poet Kalidāsa explained the highest, unprecedented beauty of a woman. He has written about a Gandharva who,

in deep separation from his lover, sends a message to her, describing her beauty. Using a cloud as his messenger, he glorifies her extraordinary beauty:

tanvi śyāmā śikori daśana, pakka bimba daroṣṭi,  
madhye khema cakita harinī prekṣana nimna navi  
sroni varadalo sagamana, stoka namra sthana vyam  
ya tatra syatyuvati viśaye, sriṣṭira dyaivi dhatu

*Tanvi* means slim; her body complexion is not really bright, but Śyāma, shining blue or shining black; *śikori daśana* – her teeth are like beautiful pearls; *pakka bimba daroṣṭi* - her lips are like *bimba* fruit; *madhye khema* - her waist is very thin; *cakita harinī prekṣana* – her eyes are like a doe’s; *nimna navi* – her navel is very deep; *sroni varadalo sagamana* – although she is very slim, two parts of her body are very prominent, her firm rounded breasts and curved buttocks. Because of the weight of these two parts she is moving very slowly, *gajendra gamini* – her movements are like that of a she-elephant, she is walking very slowly and gracefully.

Kalidāsa said this definition of a damsel’s beauty portrays the most beautiful girl in this universe for our visualisation. But this girl is only a Gandharva of the heavenly realm, which is situated within the material world.

Next, we will hear from Rāmāi Ṭhākura about the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī, whose beauty and qualities are beyond the material realm. He quotes verses from Bhajana Candrikā by Vṇḍāvana Candra Dāsa.

yasmin kale gataḥ kuñje mudā madana kaiśore  
prabāla maṇi muktāyā racanena manoharet (18)

“Once, this enchanting adolescent girl, Anaṅga Mañjarī, was blissfully strolling in her *kuñja*, beautifully adorned with coral and pearl jewels.” (Bhajana Candrikā)

ekasmin kāle dhani, madana kaiśora jini  
dagamagi mādhyera sīmā  
anaṅga mañjarī dhanī, prabāla mukutā-maṇi  
ābharāṇa ko kohu mahimā (19)

“Once upon a time this enchanting adolescent girl, Anaṅga Mañjarī, was immersed unlimitedly in the sweetness of divine love. She was beautifully adorned with coral and pearl jewels. Who can describe her glories?”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, “I cannot explain the beauty of this girl. Even if I try my best, it will just be an insignificant percentage of her actual beauty.” Even Lord Brahmā with his four heads will fail to describe her beauty. Her *mādhurya* has no limits. It is endless. Her beauty is the summum-bonum of all of the beauty of the three worlds.

Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura fails to describe Anaṅga Mañjarī adequately for two reasons. Firstly, because there is nothing in this material world that can be used to compare her beauty to; there are no words in any language that can describe her beauty. Secondly, she is beyond what the mind can perceive. So, he could only try to the best of his ability to describe what his mind could distinguish.

This same situation arose with Lord Brahmā. Brahmā had this pride that he was the most knowledgeable person in this whole universe and was the nearest and dearest to Bhagavān. Thus Kṛṣṇa wanted to destroy his pride. When Brahmā and the other gods came to Vṛndāvana, they saw Kṛṣṇa standing on a jewelled throne playing his flute. Seeing Kṛṣṇa’s inconceivable beauty, everyone was astonished. they stood speechless before Kṛṣṇa in deep awe and reverence.

After a while, Kṛṣṇa stopped playing his flute and asked Brahmā and the devatas if everything was alright in *svarga-loka* (heavenly realm) and enquired why they had all come to see him. Brahmā replied: “Everything is fine Prabhu, we are just speechless seeing your beauty! We did not come here with any problem. We are here to worship and offer *vandanā* (prayers). But now we are dumbfounded by the sight of your entrancing beauty. There is nothing in this world that is comparable to your beauty. It is impossible for us to sing your *vandanā*. Any attempt to glorify you will be inadequate in comparison to your beauty. The most beautiful object in this world, like the moon and the lotus are insignificant before your beauty. Just the beauty of your eyes defeats even a million lotuses. We have nothing to compare it with.”

Then Kṛṣṇa said mockingly:

svayaṁ tv asāmyātiśayas tryadhīśaḥ  
svārājya-lakṣmy-āpta-samasta-kāmaḥ  
balim haradbhiś cira-loka-pālaiḥ  
kirīṭa-kotyēḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ

“Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all kinds of threes and is independently supreme by achievement of all kinds of fortune. He is worshiped by the eternal maintainers of the creation, who offer him the paraphernalia of worship by touching their millions of helmets to his feet.” (SB 3.2.21)

“Oh! Brahmā, you are the father of all Vedas, but you have no words to glorify me?” Brahmā confessed, “No, Prabhu! All this is beyond my intelligence; even the Vedas are not able to express your beauty and your truths. We beg you to please accept the sentiments of our hearts, expressed with humility, whichever way befits us. We will offer our *praṇāms* without touching your lotus feet, as we are unqualified to do so. Please allow us to offer our *praṇāmas* to the jewelled throne on which you are standing. By touching our golden crowns to this throne, a sweet sound will emanate from the clash of the crowns with the throne. Please accept that sound as our *vandanā*, as we are short of words and are incapable of singing your praises. You are the destroyer of the darkness of ignorance and you are known as *bhāva grāhī janārdana* (He accepts only the essence of a devotee’s attitude).”

Even four headed Brahmā failed to glorify Kṛṣṇa with words. In the same way there are no words to describe the beauty or qualities of his eternal associates, like Anaṅga Mañjarī. Rāmāi Ṭhākura admits, that his description of the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī is totally insignificant. We have to multiply it a million times in our own *sādhana* to realise a tiny bit of her actual beauty.

dvādaśa vayasa sthiti, vasanta ketakī kānti,  
aṅga śobhā kohone nā yāy  
nīla paṭṭa paridhāna, ghaṇe taḍid anumāna,  
kandarpera darpa ke lājāya (20)

“She is always in a joyous and playful mood. Her eternal age is twelve years. Her bodily complexion is like a springtime light bluish-white *ketaki* flower. She wears blue lotus coloured silken attire and she defeats Kandarpa (Cupid) with her beauty.”

### Commentary:

The duty of Cupid is to bewilder the mind into indulging in *kāma*, sense gratification. But seeing Anaṅga Mañjarī, Cupid forgets his own duty and stops all his activities. The power of her beauty is such that it can never be attacked by Cupid's arrows. This power is also within all the other *mañjarīs*, as they are always attached to Kṛṣṇa, who can never be touched by the power of Cupid. Only Kṛṣṇa can bewilder the mind of Pradyumna, the *sākṣāt* (directly) Kāmadeva.

Anaṅga Mañjarī is the most powerful of all the *mañjarīs*. Kandarpa stands powerless and surrenders in defeat before Anaṅga Mañjarī.

śrī mukha maṇḍala śaśī, tāke sudhā mṛdu hāsi,  
bhuru-yuga kāmera kāmāna  
kaṭākṣa madana śare, bhuvana mohite kore  
heno māni nayāna sandhāna (21)

“The beauty of her face is like a full moon. Her smile is like a stream of nectar and her eyebrows resemble the bows of Kāmadeva. She attracts the three worlds by shooting the arrows of her *kaṭākṣa*, her sidelong glances. The best *sādhana* for our eyes is to take her *darśan*.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is comparing the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī's face with a full-moon. Through the rays of the full moon, the *sudhā* (nectar) is always flowing down. Anaṅga Mañjarī's smile is just like that nectar, flowing down from her full-moon face, bestowing immortality. Her smiling face is an indication that she is pleased with us. She destroys all our bad qualities and removes the darkness and ignorance from our heart.

What kind of immortality does the smile of Anaṅga Mañjarī bestow? There are two types of immortality: One is the immortality that the rays of the moon confer through its nectar. But this immortality is on the mundane platform. It is not eternal. No one can achieve permanent immortality by it.

In Rāmānanda-saṁvāda, Śrīman Mahāprabhu asked Rāya Ramānanda: “How is it possible for one to attain immortality in this material world?”

One may attain immortality by acquiring great fame through their talents, or by creating or inventing something for which people will remember them for time immemorial. Consider, for example, the fame of great sculptors and painters. When we look at the picture of Monalisa, it

reminds us of Leonardo da Vinci, as the painter of Monalisa, although he died a long time ago. So, da Vinci got his immortal fame through his talent. This is the only way people get immortality in this world. But even this is not a permanent immortality.

Mahāprabhu then asked Rāmānanda Rāya, “How does one attain eternal immortality?”

‘kīrti-gaṇa-madhye jīvera kon baḍa kīrti?’

‘kṛṣṇa-bhakta baliyā yānhāra haya khyāti’

(Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked): “Out of all glorious activities, which is the most glorious?” (Rāmānanda Rāya replied): “Anyone engaged in *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is the most glorious and gets everlasting fame.” (CC Madhya 8.246)

Rāya said: “*kṛṣṇa-bhakta baliyā yānhāra haya khyāti*, he who has the identity of a dear and near associate of Kṛṣṇa can attain this permanent immortality because Kṛṣṇa is permanent and eternal.”

The scriptures recommend:

tam eva viditvā ati mṛtyum eti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ‘yanāya

“Only by knowing the Supreme Spirit can one transcend death and attain immortality.” (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8. & 5.15)

If we want permanent immortality we should not accept the nectar which the gods and the *asuras* acquired by churning the ocean of milk. By acquiring knowledge about Kṛṣṇa and his associates, our mind would always be engaged in meditating about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa which are eternal. Then we can attain eternal and permanent immortality. Those who are intelligent will not seek immortality through their immortal bodies. They will seek that immortality which grants them a permanent position to be always together with Kṛṣṇa.

Although Kṛṣṇa performed his pastimes five-thousand years ago, we are still remembering him with all his eternal associates, like his friends Śrīdāma, Sudāma, Vasudāma and also Sudāma-vipra, the brahmin boy who was Kṛṣṇa’s childhood friend in his *gurukula* days.

Although Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva are not eternal associates, they were pure devotees. Whenever we think of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, automatically we remember all these pure devotees’ prema for Kṛṣṇa, and we remember them

with love. We also hear of Kamsa, Śisupāla and Dantavakra, but we do not remember them with love. They also attained immortality, but in an unfavourable way (*sāyujya mukti*). They were enemies of Kṛṣṇa. We should not follow their mood. We have to love Kṛṣṇa, not despise Kṛṣṇa.

By getting attached to Kṛṣṇa, his pastimes and his associates, we become eligible for eternal immortality. If we accept the nectar that was obtained by the *devatas* and *asuras* through the churning of the milk ocean, we get temporary immortality, which only lasts for some lifetime.

We should aspire for pure nectar showered through the smile of Anaṅga Mañjarī and attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Her eyebrows are like the bow of Kāmadeva. She is attracting this universe and bewildering our minds by throwing the arrows of her *kaṭākṣa*, her sidelong glances. The glances of beautiful damsels are usually described, as sidelong glances. In *padyāvalī-kirtans*, it is described how Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* cast their indirect glances towards Kṛṣṇa, which are like arrows of Kāmadeva. This sidelong glance of Anaṅga Mañjarī is so powerful, that it can even baffle the mind of Kṛṣṇa, who bewilders Kāmadeva.

Rūpa Gosvāmī described Kṛṣṇa as Madana Mohana. Kṛṣṇa can bewilder the mind of *sākṣāt* Kāmadeva, Pradyumna, only when Rādhārāṇī is with him.

rādhā-saṅge yadā bhāti  
tadā ‘madana-mohanah’  
anyathā viśva-moho ‘pi  
svayaṁ ‘madana-mohitaḥ’

The female parrot said, “When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī, he is the enchanter of Cupid; otherwise, when he is alone, he himself is enchanted by erotic feelings even though he enchants the whole universe.” (Govinda-Līlāmṛta 13.32/CC Madhya 17.216)

Anaṅga Mañjarī has the same qualities as Rādhārāṇī. She attracts the whole universe with the arrows of her sidelong glances.

We perform *sādhana* through all of our different limbs, like our ears, eyes, and hands. Rāmāi Ṭhākura says the best *nayana-sādhana* (*sādhana* of our eyes) is to take *darśan* of Anaṅga Mañjarī. First, we have to practise by taking *darśan* of the deities. Later with their blessings, we will be qualified to take their direct *darśan*.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes how our senses can become successful:

sā vāg yayā tasya guṇān grṇīte  
 karau ca tat-karma-karau manaś ca  
 smared vasantaṁ sthira-jaṅgameṣu  
 śṛṇoti tat-puṇya-kathāḥ sa karnaḥ

“Actual speech is that which describes the qualities of the Lord, real hands are those that work for Him, a true mind is that which always remembers Him dwelling within everything moving and non-moving, and actual ears are those that listen to sanctifying topics about Him (*harikathā*).” (SB 10.80.3)

Our tongue is considered successful when we are always chanting or glorifying the *līlās* and when the *mahā-mantra* dances on our tongue. Our hands are successful when we use them for *kṛṣṇa-sevā* and *bhakta-sevā*. Our mind is successful, when we start seeing the presence of Kṛṣṇa in everything, the moving and non-moving objects in this world. Whenever we see the cows or the forest, our mind will be reminded of *goṣṭha-līlā*. The sky reminds us of the bodily complexion of Kṛṣṇa. When our ears are eager for hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, then they are successful. Our head is successful when we prostrate at the lotus feet of not only Kṛṣṇa, but his devotees as well. Our eyes are successful, when we take darśan of Kṛṣṇa and his devotees.

In Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura mentions one very important *śloka*:

kṛṣṇa-bhakta saṅga kori kṛṣṇa-bhakta aṅga heri  
 śraddhānvita śravaṇa-kīrtana  
 arcana vandaṇa dhyāna nava-bhakti mahā-jñāna  
 ei bhakti parama-kāraṇa

“The supreme process of devotional service is *sadhu-saṅga*, associating with Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotees, which means to take their darśan with faith and follow the nine kinds of bhakti like hearing, chanting and meditating in their association.” (PBC 18)

We can attain bhakti simply by associating and taking *darśan* of pure devotees. Just by accepting their *caranāmṛta*, our lives can become successful. The first line of this *śloka*, *kṛṣṇa bhakta saṅga kori*, means to take the association of pure devotees. Then again Narottama Dāsa repeats *kṛṣṇa bhakto aṅgo heri*, to see or take *darśan* of the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. When we associate with the pure devotees, we obviously take their *darśan* at the same



time. So why did Narottama Dāsa stress these two points, to associate and take *darśan*, separately? He wants to remind us that whenever we go to any pure devotee, we must realise whose presence we are in. He is not any ordinary person of this material world. He is a very pure devotee, a very dear one of Kṛṣṇa. So, *sādhu sabdhan!* Be careful! Just by seeing a pure devotee with our material eyes we will not get any realisation. *Adau śraddhā*, we must be careful to approach him with sincere faith, humility and respect. Only then will we benefit from his *darśan*. Otherwise, we will be cheated into thinking that he is just an ordinary human being.

All the pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa are trickier than Kṛṣṇa. They try to hide themselves from the name, fame and position of this material world, so that they will not be disturbed by the common men. Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābājī at times performed his *bhajana* in an abandoned toilet. He knew no one would enter this contaminated, impure place. This is the way *siddha-mahatmas* try to protect their *bhajana*.

Once Someone approached Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābājī and asked him for initiation. Bābājī asked him where he came from. That person replied: “Oh, Baba! It is very far from here. I am from West Bengal.” “How many cities did you have to cross to come here?” The person calculated, “Many cities.” Bābājī asked: “How many villages did you have to cross to get here?” Again, he told him and Bābājī asked again: “How many rivers did you have to cross to come here?” He gave the number of rivers and the Bābājī said: “Oh, you had to cross so many cities, villages and rivers just to destroy my *bhajana*!” This is a *siddha-mahatma*’s quality. They are always trying to protect their *bhajana*. If we are fortunate enough to receive the blessings of *siddha-mahatmas*, who are like *parasa-maṇi*, touchstones, then we can be transformed immediately into gold. We have to try to get this “touch.”

Before we take *darśan* of any pure devotee, we must realize that they are not of this material world. We must approach them with humility, sincerity and faith. In Caitanya-Caritāmṛta it is said,

‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre koy  
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi hoy

“Even by one moment of *sādhu-saṅga* – association with a saintly devotee – one can attain full spiritual perfection. This is the conclusion of all scriptures.” (CC 22.54)

*Lava* here means the blink of an eye. Even with a moment's association of a pure devotee, we can attain all perfection very quickly, provided we approach him in the proper mood.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says that by taking *darśan* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, the *sādhana* of our eyes attains perfection.

lalāṭe sindūra bindu, megha tale yeno indu,  
tārāgaṇa alakāra bhāti  
piṭhete doliche veṇī, phaṇi mukhe yeno maṇi  
malli dāma bhramarera pāti (22)

“On her forehead, she has a spot of *sindhur* that shines like a new moon. Her black curly locks of hair look like clouds. The sweat-droplets on her forehead look like glistening stars. Her braid dangles over her back, like a cobra moving with a pearl on its head; the jasmine garlands in her braid look like swarms of buzzing bees.”

### Commentary:

She has a spot of *sindhur*, vermillion, on her forehead, and it looks like a new moon that rises in the sky. When a new moon rises, it is not totally white. It is a little reddish. Her black curly locks of hair look like clouds. When the moon is present, there are usually clouds and also the stars around it. The moon is always surrounded by stars. Because she is performing service, she is sweating, and all the droplets of sweat on her forehead look like stars. Due to her body complexion, all the droplets of sweat look like glistening stars. When we take *darśan* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, we will see the solar system in her body. The moon, the stars, clouds, everything is present. Her braid is very long and beautiful, touching her knees. It is dancing on her back, and her *veṇī* is decorated with jewels, one very big star-studded jewel along with many smaller jewels. Her braid is decorated from top to bottom with garlands of jasmine.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is comparing her braid with a snake. In Candan-yatra there is a very nice song which describes the beauty of Rādhārāṇī's braid. The *pada-karta*, the writer of this song, Rāmadās Bābājī Mahārāja, has also compared the braid of Rādhārāṇī to a snake. The explanations given by Rāmadās Ṭhākura are very poetic and eloquent. It seems like the composer wrote what he saw in his *darśan* – The beauty of Rādhārāṇī's snake-like braid,

cand cand śyāma cander bame, cand badani daralo  
 śyāme śire mohoncura rai śire veni  
 śyāme śire mohoncura rai śire veni  
 cure kare jhalamala veni dhare phani  
 cand cand śyāma cander bame cand badani daralo  
 dekho cand ke ghire cander mālā,  
 śyāma ke ghire vraja bāla,  
 cand ke ghire chander mālā  
 cand cand śyāma cander bame, cand badani daralo

“Kṛṣṇa is a moon, but surprisingly, there are two moons: Kṛṣṇa Candra, and another moon, Rādhā, standing beside Kṛṣṇa. What a beautiful sight! There is a very nice golden crown on Kṛṣṇa’s head. But Rādhārāṇī has something more beautiful than a jewelled crown; she has a *veṇī*, a snake-like braid. All the *sakhīs* are also like moons dancing around in a circle. It is like a garland of moons garlanding the two moons in the centre. While dancing, Rādhārāṇī’s braid sways, like a snake on her back. The reflection from Kṛṣṇa’s glittering crown blocks direct darśan, but from another direction, Kṛṣṇa can be seen bending towards Rādhārāṇī; her snake-like braid has bitten him. The nectar like poison of that snake had a spell-binding effect on Kṛṣṇa, making him helplessly bend towards her.”

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is also taking *darśan* of Anaṅga Mañjarī in a similar way. He says: “Just look at the snake crawling up the back of her body.” When she walks, her braid sways like a snake.” Viewing her *darśan* from the back, Rāmāi Ṭhākura exclaims: “Oh, what a beauty! A snake is crawling up her body carrying a very rare jewel, *sarpa-maṇi*, on its head.”

Snakes and elephants have their own jewel, but these are very rare jewels. Only by good fortune can we see the jewels of snakes and elephants. The jewel studded *veṇī*, her braid, looks like a snake carrying its own jewel. It is very significant for snakes to carry their jewel on their heads. But here, the snake is seen to be holding the jewel in its mouth to offer it to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Her braid is also decorated with jasmine garlands. So many bumblebees are buzzing around her braid, so it seems like they have their nest there. They have found their eternal home.

ratna dṛeḍi śruti mūle, oṣṭha dui bimbaphale  
 kuṇḍa kali daśanera ābbā  
 nāsā ucca tila phule, tāhāte mukutā dole,  
 gaṇḍa sthala kaumudīra prabhā(23)

“Her earlobes are beautifully decorated with nice earrings made of precious gems. Her lips are like red *bimba* fruit. Her teeth are sparkling white like Kuṇḍa-flowers.<sup>23</sup> Her nose is like a raised sesame flower with a pearl hanging from it. Her cheeks are radiant like a *kaumudi* lotus on a full moon night.”

grīvā ati manohara, supīna sundara ura  
bhūṣaṇe bhūṣita tanu khāni  
kaṇṭhe hāra candrakānti, kuca-yuga śobhe ati,  
kañcuka upare dinamāṇi (24)

“Her neck is very beautiful and is decorated with all kinds of attractive ornaments. A moonstone necklace dangles on her neck and decorates her breasts. This necklace has a huge shimmering locket that looks like a pearl mounted on armour.”

bhuja latā yuga mājhe, kaṭaka kañkaṇa sāje  
angule mudrikā śobhe bhālo  
siṁha vā ḍamaru jini, madhya-deśa ati kṣṇī t  
trivali taraṅga roma jāla (25)

“Her vine-like arms are adorned with armlets and bangles. Her fingers are decorated with very beautiful jewelled rings. Her slender waist, which looks like the mid-portion of a Damaru, defeats the waist of a lion. On her belly, there is a *trivali*, a group of three lines of very fine hair.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is comparing her waist to the mid-portion of a Damaru, (Mahādeva’s double sided drum) since it is very small. According to the description in *rasa-śāstra*, it is as small as cupping both hands together. He has described the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī and her fine ornaments. There will be much more in the following verses. All these descriptions are for our meditation on her *svarūpa* in our *sādhana*. Although he has made comparisons with material objects, we have to multiply that beauty a million times in our meditation, and then perhaps we can realise a tiny drop of her

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<sup>23</sup> Another name for Kṛṣṇa is Mukuṇḍa, because his teeth look like Kuṇḍa-flowers. Rāmāi Thakur describes Anaṅga Mañjarī’s beautiful teeth as resembling Kuṇḍa-flowers.

beauty. Rāmāi Ṭhākura has already admitted previously that it is not possible for him to describe her beauty by comparing it to anything of this world.

After describing the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī beginning from her moon-like face and her beautiful smile, he continues describing the beauty of every part of her face one by one followed by her throat, her arms, and the middle portion of her body. Now he will describe the rest of her body.

nābhi padma jini śobhā, gaja-kumbha śreṇī ābhā  
 kīṅkini koroye jhālamali  
 sūkṣma citra vastra tāya, aṅga ati śobhā pāya  
 uru-yuga kaṇaka kadali (26)

“Her navel defeats the beauty of a thousand-petalled lotus flower. The sash of bells below her navel shines like the temples of a herd of elephants. Her body is beautified by thin decorative garments and her thighs resemble golden bananas.”

### Commentary:

There are three main parts of the body of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī which are compared to a lotus: their *carana-kamala* – lotus feet, *nābhi-kamala* – lotus navel, and *vadana-kamala* – lotus face. Sometimes other parts, like their hands, are also referred to as *kara-kamala*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, that the beauty of Anaṅga Mañjarī’s navel can be compared to a thousand petalled lotus, which has a very enchanting fragrance. It is very deep, and there is very fine hair all around it, which looks like the filaments of the lotus.

Below her navel she has a sash of *kīṅkini* bells glittering brightly. He sees the beauty of the rays of light emanating from these bells to be like elephants walking together in a herd. He felt her presence, as though she was speaking to him. While she spoke, the parts of her navel, the belly portion, started vibrating. At the same time, while she was talking, the sash of bells on her waist was jingling. Admiring this marvellous beauty, he sighed. The rays of light from the bells on her sash looked like a herd of elephants carrying this thousand petalled lotus on their heads and moving very slowly in a graceful gait, all in a line.

In the *rasa-śāstra* Megaduta, in the *nārī-saundarya* (“beauty of a woman”) chapter, the poet Kalidāsa describes that the movements of those who are very beautiful are usually very gentle and slow with a gait as if they have some weight on them. If we compare the beauty described in the *rasa-*

*śāstras* of the *yuvatis*, the young girls, to the descriptions given in the *vaiṣṇava-śāstras* by the Six Goswāmīs of the beauty of Rādhārāṇī, Anaṅga Mañjarī, and the other sakhīs, we will find that they are almost similar. The difference is that Kalidāsa has imagined this beauty, but Rāmāi Ṭhākura and the Goswāmīs have seen this beauty in direct *darśan*.

Anaṅga Mañjarī also has a ‘weight’. That is why her movements are very slow and gentle. All Kṛṣṇa’s *gopī* friends are similar in nature. They are very gentle, polite and move very slowly and gracefully. Sometimes, when they are fighting with Kṛṣṇa they portray an aggressive nature. They chase Kṛṣṇa out of the *kuñja*, but that is not their innate nature. It is on very rare occasions that they behave in this manner for the sake of accomplishing the *līlā*. Rāmāi Ṭhākura realised why Anaṅga Mañjarī has this special gait of a *gaja-gāminī*, walking very slowly, like a she-elephant. It was due to the weight of her prema. The bright light that glitters from her sash of bells is the light that emanates from her moon-like face.

All the limbs of her body, her mood, her speech and her glances are all naturally so beautiful, that there is no need for any extra decoration. In the last verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura mentions that when ornaments and jewels are placed on her body, it is not for beautifying her body; rather, the jewels are getting beautified by her body. When we wear ornaments on our body, it is to decorate and beautify our body, but for the *gopīs* it is the complete opposite. In *Veṇu-Gītā*, the *gopīs* glorify Kṛṣṇa’s beauty:

barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ  
bibhṛad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vaijayantīm ca mālāṁ  
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-Vṛndāir  
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada ramaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

“Śyāmasundara is entering the forest of Vṛndāvana accompanied by His cowherd boyfriends. He wears a peacock feather in His turban, a yellow karṇikāra flower on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold, and a heart-stealing multicoloured garland strung with five kinds of fragrant forest flowers. Thus He displays His form as the greatest of dancers and the topmost expert in amorous love. The nectar of His lips flows through the holes of the flute and thus the glorious vibrations of His flute-song echo throughout the forest groves. Singing His glories, the cowherd boys follow from behind. In this way, Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, which is more charming than *Vaikuṇṭha*, becomes delighted by the touch of His lotus feet.” (SB 10.21.5)

The *gopīs* are discussing Kṛṣṇa's enchanting beauty amongst themselves. When they take *darśan* of the *vaijayantī-mālā* adorning Kṛṣṇa's neck, they were puzzled to see the garland swaying on its own accord while Kṛṣṇa was standing still. Then one of them said: "Kṛṣṇa is trying to show off his beautiful garland to us." It is natural that, when someone has something very beautiful, they would want others to notice it and give them some compliments out of admiration, which would make them proud. The ornaments that are placed on the body of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī feel very proud of themselves. This sakhī said: "Kṛṣṇa is showing off his beautiful garland and at the same time the garland is proud to be placed on Kṛṣṇa's body because his body is *bhūṣaṇa-bhūṣaṇāṅgam* – the ornament for all ornaments" (SB 3.2.12).

Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rādhārāṇī do not need to adorn themselves. But still we are decorating them out of our *rasa* and *ruci* for our *iṣṭadeva* (our object of love and worship). It gives us great pleasure to beautify them in the mood of devotion.

*Sūkṣma citra vastra tāya*, she wears a very nicely designed thin *vastra*, cloth, to cover the upper and lower part of her body. The thin material of her clothing allows her body's effulgence to penetrate outwards and reveal itself. It is an exquisite beauty.

Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, describing the beauty of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, said the effulgence emanating from Mahāprabhu's body penetrates through his clothes. This is very unusual. If we cover a light bulb with a thick cloth, then the light is unable to penetrate through the cloth. But, Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura says, that for Mahāprabhu, it is astonishing that his clothes cannot hide his bodily effulgence.

Anaṅga Mañjarī is wearing very thin clothes, very nicely designed with paintings, sometimes with different colours and sometimes with the same colours. Her beautiful thighs look like golden bananas trunks and are very soft.

Close to her *kuñja*, on the banks of the Yamunā, there is a garden of golden banana trees, *svarna-kadali-vrikṣa*. The skin of this banana is very thin and it is very bright without any spots. *Suvarna kadali tamuru-yuga kanaka kadali*, her thighs resemble such ripe golden banana. If we keep bananas for some days, some black spots will appear. But the freshly ripened bananas are spotless and her thighs resemble that. Her body is always fresh and new, *nitya nava-nava yauvanam*. That's the surprising thing about her beauty. At every moment we will find a new beauty manifesting. Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and Balarāma have the same quality. At first glance, Kṛṣṇa is so

beautiful. Then at second glance, we will find a different beauty and again after another glance, another beauty will manifest. In this way we will find that his beauty keeps increasing with every glance and every time his beauty will be of a different form. Sometimes it will be confusing to identify which is the most beautiful form. In the commentary on the above *śloka*, *barhāpīḍam naṭa-vara-vapuh karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ*, one *sakhī* says:

“Look how very beautiful Kṛṣṇa is. He has two ears but he has placed a *karnika* flower on only one ear.” Another *sakhī* says: “One is enough. To place flowers on both the ears, there must be two identical flowers of the same size and shape, which is rare to find.” Then, another *sakhī* said: “No! Kṛṣṇa is very naughty! He likes to tease us and his friends. Just watch: After putting the *karnika* flower on one ear, he asked his friends, “How do I look?” His friends said: “Oh Kṛṣṇa! Very beautiful!” Then, he shifted the flower to the other ear and asked: “How do I look now?” and his friends said: “More beautiful, Kṛṣṇa.” Once again, Kṛṣṇa changed the flower to his right ear and asked his friends the same thing, and they said: “Oh, Kṛṣṇa more beautiful than before.” Then Kṛṣṇa said, “What? I changed it to the left and then to right and then back to the left and you say it is more beautiful than before? Are you alright?” His *sakhās*, feeling confused, said: “Oh Kṛṣṇa, your beauty is very amazing and confusing. At every moment it keeps changing! It is beyond expression, and we are simple cowherd boys with no knowledge of adequate vocabulary to describe or to express with words anything about your beauty. We are dumbfounded.”

Then another *sakhī* said: “Kṛṣṇa is very naughty. He is teasing his *sakhās*. He is switching the flower between the right and left ear and asking again and again how he looks.”

Their beauty is such that it keeps changing at every glance and with each new glance we get newer and a different type of pleasure, *nitya nava-nava yauvanam*, this beauty is not just from their body but from every aspect.

Before Sūtadeva began his *bhagavat-kathā* in front of the audience of sixty thousand Munis and Ṛṣis in Naimiṣāraṇya, he wanted to check and see if they were mentally eligible for the *kathā*. He told his listeners that there is one danger in listening to *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. Śaunaka Ṛṣi was puzzled and asked: “What is the danger?” Sūtadeva replied: “When we take too much of something sweet, it has side effects, and then we need to take another taste to reverse the side effect, some salty or bitter taste. *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* is similar to eating sweets. If we keep relishing too much of its sweetness, we feel bored. Then it will be an offence for you and for me also. So, perhaps it would be better if we change the topic of the *kathā* to something else to prevent that



from happening. We can speak on other spiritual topics and in between we can speak some *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and there will be a balance.”

Śaunaka Ṛṣi replied: “No! No! We want to listen only to *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. We want pure *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and nothing else. We will not be affected by any side effects; we can assure you of that. There is no doubt that *kṛṣṇa-kathā* is very sweet, in fact it is sweeter than anything else. But the sweetness of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* has an amazing positive effect. It gives a different taste of sweetness at every moment and it gets sweeter at every moment. And that will not allow any uneasiness or boredom to arise.”

vayaṁ tu na vitṛpyāma  
uttama-śloka-vikrame  
yac-chṛṇvatām rasa-jñānām  
svādu svādu pade pade

“We are never satiated of hearing the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, who is glorified by the best *ślokas*. Those who have developed the higher taste by regularly hearing *harikathā* (in *sadhu-saṅga*) deeply relish hearing of His pastimes at every step.” (SB 1.1.19)

“It is not possible for us to experience any kind of side effects nor will any offences be committed by listening to *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. If we get blessings from Kṛṣṇa, he will eradicate the darkness of ignorance from our heart, and then this dullness and boredom will not touch us. He will accept the responsibility of protecting us; he is known as *uttama-śloka*. He will protect us from all negative energies that may enter our hearts. By his power and his mercy, he will give us more and more pleasure.’

The same thing happens when we discuss the beauty of all the close associates of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa himself. Whenever we engage in discussing their qualities or meditating on them, we get ever new feelings arising in our hearts. There is no place for boredom.

pada-dvaya kañja jini, nakha candra jini maṇi,  
bājana mañjira śobhe tāya  
gamana manthara ati, yeno rāja-haṁsa gati,  
kṛṣṇa rāge heli doli yāya (27)

“Her lotus feet defeat the beauty of lotus flowers. Her toenails shine, like glittering jewels. Her feet are beautified by jingling ankle bells. Her

movements are very slow and she walks in the gait of an elephant. She sways and turns around gracefully in *kṛṣṇa-prema* like a *rāja-haṁsa*.”

### Commentary:

Her feet look like lotuses, *carana-kamala*. The three most important parts for *sādhakas* to concentrate on the divine forms of the deities are their lotus feet, lotus navel and lotus face. While performing *ārati*, we have to perform our worship beginning first from their feet, then their navel and then their face. This way we can relish the taste of honey from these three lotuses. When the *sādhaka* relishes the taste of honey by this procedure, that means they have obtained the full mercy and blessings of the deity. We have to follow this procedure in our worship: starting from bottom to top.

Similarly, when we meditate upon them, we have to first meditate on their lotus feet, then their navel portion, and lastly their face. This is the rule of taking *darśan* of the deity. Sometimes, when the *sādhaka* is absorbed in the madness of prema, they will not be conscious of this rule.

In the underlying meaning of the śloka: *barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ*, the *gopīs*, after seeing Kṛṣṇa, lost their external consciousness. In the madness of prema, they took *darśan* of Kṛṣṇa by noticing the peacock feather on his head first, *barhāpīḍaṁ*, “Oh, the peacock feathers!” they exclaimed. Then, they continued with *naṭa-vara-vapuḥ*, the whole body; next they noticed the beautiful *karnika* flowers on his ears and their eyes moved there. In the mood of *prema-unmada-dāśa*, divine madness, they surpassed all rules and took spontaneous *darśan*, without following the normal steps and procedures. But while we are in the stage of practise, we must follow these rules. We must first offer all our prayers and offerings, beginning from the lotus feet: “Please give me a place at your lotus feet.” If we get a place at their lotus feet, then there is hope, that one day they will allow us to serve them. We are all on the waiting list for the day when our guru *mañjarī* will take us by our hand to Yugalā Kīśora and they will look at us with smiling faces, as a gesture of approval. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura says in his prayerful song:

śrī-rūpa paścāte āmi rohibo bhīta hoiyā  
doñhe pūnaḥ kohibena āmā pāne cāiya  
śrī-rūpa-mañjarī tabe doñhā vākya śuni  
mañjūlālī dilo more ei dāsī āni

“Seeing me standing shyly behind Śrī Rūpa, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, with kind hearts will smilingly ask Śrī Rūpa, ‘Where have you brought this new maidservant from?’ Hearing Their enquiry, Śrī Rūpa will answer: ‘Mañjūlālī brought her and gave her to me. I examined her and found her to be very soft-hearted and humble, therefore engaging her in Your service, I have kept her here’. Śrī Rūpa, after relating this to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, will mercifully engage Narottama Dāsa in the Divine Couple’s service.” (Prārthana, song 19)

He is expressing his own feelings. “When shall I be introduced to Yugala Kiśora for the first time, I will be standing behind Rūpa Mañjarī, trembling with anxiety whether they will accept my sevā or reject me.”

Actually, accepting and rejecting does not depend on Yugala. All the *mañjarīs* are recommended by Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. When they allow a new *mañjarī* into service, then without any question Yugala will accept them.

Whenever Anaṅga or Rūpa Mañjarī bring a new *mañjarī* to Yugala, they will look at the new *mañjarī* with smiling faces, a gesture of approval without any second thought. Just by looking at me they will smile, as if they know me inside out, as if I am one of the older *mañjarīs*. Yet, just for the sake of formality, they will enquire about me: “O Rūpa! Where did you find this new *mañjarī*?” Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura explained that this is the procedure we have to go through to gain entrance into the service world. We have to wait for Rūpa Mañjarī or Anaṅga Mañjarī to take us to the Divine Couple.

Every one of us is waiting for that moment. While performing our *sādhana* we have to be very sincere with our desire to attain entrance into the service world. In Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has clearly mentioned, that the most important part of our *sādhana* is *līlā-smaraṇa*. We should always be hankering for the *līlā* to manifest in our hearts. By the special mercy of guru and the Vaiṣṇavas, these *līlās* will manifest spontaneously in our hearts. However, nothing can happen without practice. We have to follow the rules and regulations prescribed in Hari Bhakti Vilas and other scriptures. With all humility we should begin the process of worship and surrender at her beautiful, compassionate lotus feet, *carana-kamala*.

*Pada-dvaya kañja jini*, the beauty of her lotus feet defeats the beauty of lotus flowers. It is not surprising that whenever we see something beautiful, we compare it with something equally beautiful that we see in nature. In taking *darśan* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, *carana-kamala*, we are left

dumb-founded, as there is no comparison for this beauty. *Nakha candra jini maṇi*, her toenails shine like glittering jewels of the whole world put together. *Bājana mañjira śobhe tāya*, her lotus feet are beautified by anklebells, *nūpura*, which emanate a beautiful enchanting sound when she walks. Her movements are like *gaja-gāminī*, slow movements of a sh-elephant. Rāmāi Ṭhākura gives another analogy of how she moves. She moves like a *raja-hamsa*, kingly swan. *Raja-hamsas* are big swans and they walk very slowly. Anaṅga Mañjarī walks very gracefully at a slow pace. She sways and turns around very artistically in the gait of a *raja-hamsa*. Her movements while absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-prema* are like a dance. Her natural movements are very slow and graceful, but at the time of service her movements are swift. She then performs all her duties very swiftly. Just by looking at Yugala, she can intuit what they need. At other times her movements and gestures are very slow and gentle.

*Kṛṣṇa rāge heli doli yāya*, she sways under the weight of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. The intoxication of *kṛṣṇa-prema* is like the drunken effect of *soma-rasa*. When one is intoxicated with *kṛṣṇa-prema*, they are not able to open their eyes.

When Śukadeva Goswāmī took leave from the vicinity where he spoke the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Parīkṣit Mahārāja was bewildered to see him walking with closed eyes, swaying from left to right like a swing. Parīkṣit Mahārāja wondered why his eyes were closed; later he realised that when one is drunk with *kṛṣṇa-prema*, spontaneously the external eyes will shut and the inner eyes will open towards spiritual vision. The material eyes maybe open, but one will not see or feel anything external. While intoxicated in divine absorption, the inner eye awakens to the beauty of transcendental visions and feelings. The taste of *kṛṣṇa-prema* will make the body dance with transcendental delight.

Anaṅga Mañjarī's heart is filled with *kṛṣṇa-prema* and its weight slows down her movements, so that she walks very slowly with her eyes partially closed, singing beautiful songs about Kṛṣṇa, *rāge heli doli yāya* and while singing with a delightful heart, her movements are like a rhythmic dance.

All the *kṛṣṇa-premis*, like Rādhārāṇī, her *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* speak like they are singing and their movements are like a dance. When our hearts are filled with *prema*, our bodies will start dancing and singing.

From Rāmāi Ṭhākura's description of the beauty of the bodies of their divine forms, we can understand the kind of beauty that will manifest when our heart is filled with *kṛṣṇa-prema*. *Sādhakas* need to recognise these

transformations that take place in one, who has attained *kṛṣṇa-prema*. It is not for imitating, but for realisation of such *bhāvas*. Someday, through our *sādhana*, these *bhāvas* may arise in our hearts their mercy if we listen and meditate upon their *bhāvas*. Their beauty is not connected with this mundane world but with the transcendental sentiments of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Bahulāṣṭami a very special day connected not only to Rādhārāṇī but also to Anaṅga Mañjarī. In the map of the *yogapīṭha*, we will find Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja* in the middle of Rādhākuṇḍa. The *kuñjas* of all the other *sakhīs* are situated around her *kuñja*. In Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Rūpa Goswāmī says that the easiest and simplest *sādhana* to please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is to just love Rādhā-kuṇḍa. If we have attachment to Rādhārāṇī and her *kuṇḍa*, Kṛṣṇa will shower all his blessings on us and offer himself to us. This is his promise. In this *kuṇḍa* of Rādhārāṇī the *kuñja* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, which is situated right in the middle of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, is the most prominent of all the other *kuñjas*. It is very important, that we know about her glories by listening to Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā *kathā*. *Samput* means a jewel box. This *kathā* is like a jewel box, which contains all her confidential secrets.

nīla paṭṭa ābharana, meghete bijuri yeno  
 ḍagamagi cakita cāhanī  
 anaṅga kānana mukhe, rādhānujā cole sukhe  
 nija yūtha saṅge kori dhanī (28)

“Wearing blue silken garments with her bashful captivating eyes, she resembles a flash of lightning amid the clouds. This younger sister of Rādhā blissfully proceeds to Anaṅga Ambuja *kuñja* in the forest accompanied by *sakhīs* from her own group.”

### Commentary:

She is decorated with nice jewels, ornaments and garments. In the previous verse Rāmāi Thākura describes that her upper part is covered with very fine white cloth. Now he is describing her garments, which are blue in colour. Both Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī's favourite colour is the same, royal blue. In *kirtans*, Rādhārāṇī is referred to as Nīlāmbari. We immediately remember Rādhārāṇī just by hearing the name Nīlāmbari, one who wears a blue sari. The favourite colour of Nityānanda Prabhu is also royal blue. Anaṅga Mañjarī wears a royal blue sari decorated with embroidery of golden thread. Her decorations denote her mood. The impression that one gets when seeing her walking with her decorations is *meghete bijuri jeno*, it is like

seeing lightning walking through the clouds in the sky. *Ḍagamagi cakita cāhanī*; The word *ḍagamagi* means full of prema. This mood of *ḍagamagi* is visible in Anaṅga Mañjarī's eyes, which are always intoxicated with love for Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. *Cakita cāhanī*, she is looking here and there with restless eyes. This *cāhanī*, her agitated look, is like a decoration of her mood. She is displaying her mood in such a way that would attract Kṛṣṇa. She was doing this following Rādhārāṇī's desire to give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. But at the same time something is happening with her emotions.

*Anaṅga kānana mukhe, rādhānujā cole sukhe*, Rādhārāṇī's younger sister is roaming in her own *kuñja* with her group of *sakhīs*. They were joking and laughing and conversing with each other when suddenly Kṛṣṇa appeared in the vicinity just outside her *kuñja*.

henoi samayn kāle, nanda suia āsi mile  
rūpa dekhi rahena cāhiyā  
aṅgera lāvanya dekhi, kṛṣṇa hoilā mahā-sukhī  
kohe kichu īṣat hāsiyā (29)

“Just at that time, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, appeared on the scene. Seeing her beautiful form, He was awe-struck with joy and with a smile said something to her.”

### Commentary:

When Kṛṣṇa suddenly saw Anaṅga Mañjarī strolling in her *kuñja* with all her *sakhīs*, he was astonished to see her beauty. Suddenly, the sight of Rādhārāṇī appeared in his heart and he was overwhelmed with the mood of attraction to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Her exceptional beauty on that day captured his attention, which had never happened before. What kind of beauty can attract Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Is it the beauty of her decorations, her ornaments, clothes and jewels? Today she was exceptionally beautiful, decorated with gorgeous jewellery, ornaments and fine clothes. But Kṛṣṇa was attracted to something else he saw in her; she was decorated with the beauty of pure *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and all the other *rasika* scriptures, we find that Kṛṣṇa's attraction for his devotees is when he sees them decorated with his pure prema. They may not be physically beautiful, or they may not have any beautiful clothes or ornaments to decorate themselves with, but Kṛṣṇa can see the pure prema in their hearts. That is why he keeps running after them.

Kubja is a very nice example of this. She was an unattractive looking hunchback, but she had very deep love and attachment to Kṛṣṇa. She would never go directly in front of Kṛṣṇa because of her deformity. She was afraid Kṛṣṇa might turn away after seeing her. She would not be able to tolerate the pain of rejection. When Kṛṣṇa went to Mathura with his brother Balarāma, all the residents were waiting to take their *darśan*. Kubja would take *darśan* of Kṛṣṇa from a distance and would offer a beautiful garland to him through someone else. One day, Balarāma told Kṛṣṇa he would not go with him that day, so Kṛṣṇa decided to go alone. He went out into the streets a little earlier than usual. Kubja was walking with her flower basket as Kṛṣṇa approached from the opposite direction. They bumped into each other and stood face to face. At that moment the street was deserted, as nobody had expected Kṛṣṇa to come that early. So, no one was there on the street, only Kṛṣṇa and Kubja were there, facing each other.<sup>24</sup> Suddenly, Kubja realised Kṛṣṇa was right in front of her. She felt extremely embarrassed and could not look at him. *Antaryāmī* Kṛṣṇa knew everything. He was accepting her garland every day through someone else, as she was not coming directly in front of him. Kṛṣṇa had deliberately planned to meet her that day, and this was the day that he was going to shower his mercy on her, so he came alone without Balarāma. Kṛṣṇa asked her: “Who are you?” She was stunned and could not reply. He said: “You are very dear to me. I know you take my *darśan* daily from a distance. Now, I am in front of you. You can look at me directly.” He was trying to force her, but she would not look up. Then he looked at her basket and asked her what was in it. He saw the garland and said: “I like garlands. I noticed that every day a different person is offering me a similar garland and today you have that same garland. I think you must be the person making the garlands every day and offering them to me through others.” Kubja was too shy to speak a word. Today Kṛṣṇa wanted to bless her. He wanted to repay her with the fruits of her actions and so he kept pushing her. Then he said: “I like to wear garlands. Can you offer this garland to me?” She wanted to garland him, but because of the hump on her back she could not stand straight to reach up to him. Kṛṣṇa started to tease her and said: “Why can’t you stand straight, just look at how I am standing. You are offering me a garland without looking at me?”

He kept teasing her and suddenly He caught hold of both her arms and stretched her body upwards. Instantly she transformed into a beautiful

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<sup>24</sup> Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes that Kṛṣṇa met Kubja on his first day in Mathura and was accompanied by Balarāma and the cowherd boys at that time.

woman. Her hunchback disappeared and everything changed. Even her clothes were beautiful and she could offer him the garland standing upright. Then she opened her heart and prayed to him: “Oh Kṛṣṇa, just for one day, I want to enjoy you as my husband, please fulfil this desire of mine.” Before Kṛṣṇa left Mathura for Dwārakā, he fulfilled her desire. Kṛṣṇa is not interested in anyone’s external beauty. He is attracted only by the decoration of pure prema. The way to make this prema appear in our heart is by making our life very simple and humble.

If we decorate ourselves for Kṛṣṇa, then it is considered a decoration of prema, as it is for pleasing Kṛṣṇa. The *vraja-gopīs* only decorate themselves for him. This is different from those who dress themselves to be admired by others. When *sādhakas* decorate themselves for Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will look at them. Kṛṣṇa likes everything which is beautiful, but what he loves most is those who have prema in their heart. Those who live their lives surrendered to him, dedicating their every action to him day and night, are the most beautiful. Just by looking at them, we can feel their hearts adorned with this beauty of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Anaṅga Mañjarī decorated herself solely to please Kṛṣṇa. Her only desire was to serve Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa without any self-interest. Our duty is to always give pleasure to our worshipable Lord. We must appear in front of the deities in a pleasant manner to please them. We must be cautious about cleanliness and dress appropriately for their *sevā*. We must make sure that our clothes are clean, and our body odour is pleasant. The *gopīs* and *mañjarīs* decorate themselves to please Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. Anaṅga Mañjarī decorated herself so beautifully for Kṛṣṇa that he was dazed to see the beauty of her pure prema decorating her with external beauty and this captured his heart.

*Henoī samayn kāle, nanda suia āsi mile;* While she was strolling around in her *kuñja* with her friends, all of a sudden, Kṛṣṇa appeared there. He would go daily for cow grazing in the forest with his friends and then leave them to meet Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* in Rādhākuṇḍa. That day he happened to be passing by Anaṅga Mañjarī’s *kuñja*.

After seeing her beauty, he was speechless and could not blink his eyes. He thought, “She has beauty that I have never seen before. Today she is exceptionally beautiful.” He was mesmerised. After some time he managed to compose himself and speak to her. He said: “Oh Anaṅga Mañjarī, how are you? You look very beautiful today.”

Anaṅga Mañjarī has the same mood like Rādhārāṇī because they are sisters and they are very similar in nature. Mañjarīs have a very special mood



compared to the *sakhīs*. They never accept Kṛṣṇa directly; they only follow the desire of Rādhārāṇī. Anaṅga Mañjarī is very special because she has the mood of a *mañjarī* and at the same time she has the mood of a *sakhī*, similar to Rādhārāṇī's.

kṛṣṇa nava yuvarāja, mililā yuvatī mājha,  
rasāveśe cañcala cāhanī  
śyāmala sundara tanu, madhura mūrati janu,  
dhanī āge kohe mṛdu vāṇī (30)

“When Kṛṣṇa, the young prince of Vraja, met these young girls, they were surprised and started looking at each other with an uneasy feeling. Beautiful and charming Śyāma then started speaking sweet words.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is having *darśan* of this beautiful *līlā*. Kṛṣṇa was meeting all the young girls there. These *mañjarīs* have a special mood. They love Kṛṣṇa, but when they are in close proximity with him, they feel very uncomfortable and suspicious. They started wondering why he had come there alone. What were Kṛṣṇa's intentions for coming there alone? He knew their mood very well; that they would only like to see him when he was with Rādhārāṇī – yet he had come there alone. Kṛṣṇa was very well aware of this because Rādhārāṇī had once showed him proof of this.

Once he praised the *mañjarīs* in front of Rādhārāṇī: “Oh Rādhē, all the *mañjarīs* are really very beautiful.” Rādhārāṇī told Kṛṣṇa: “Don't disturb them Kṛṣṇa or you will be embarrassed by their ridicule.” “Oh Rādhē, all the young girls in Vraja love me.” “Yes, Kṛṣṇa, I know they all love you, and these *mañjarīs* also love you, but their love is very different. You cannot flirt with them like you do with the other *gopīs* such as Candrāvalī, Śyāmā and Citra.” “Ha, Rādhē, I will prove to you that I can do the same with them too.” Rādhā said: “I am telling you not to fool with them or else you will have to face the consequences, but you can try if you like. Just look in the garden. There are some *mañjarīs* there.”

Kṛṣṇa went to the garden and saw some *mañjarīs* busy picking flowers, making garlands and picking fruits. He went to the one picking flowers and started talking to her in the charming style that he would use to bewilder the minds of other damsels. This is his mood of *dhīra-Lalitā-nāyaka*.

According to *rasa-śāstras* the special quality of *nāyakas* is that they are very ingenious and they know how to trick by using words. They know how to bewilder the mind of young girls. Kṛṣṇa is the supreme *nāyaka*. He started doing the same tricks with the *mañjarī* who was picking flowers. He was the only one talking; he started praising her and glorifying her beauty, her dress and her hair decoration. The *mañjarī* ignored him and did not utter a word. All his efforts were in vain and he was really surprised. He thought, maybe she was deaf. Usually, when he starts flirting, he would get a very quick response, but this *mañjarī* was not showing any interest whatsoever. Then he touched her and she became very furious. She tried to protect herself by moving away and Kṛṣṇa followed her. Suddenly, he grasped her hands and asked: “Oh, *mañjarī*, why are you avoiding me? Come with me, let’s play.” Then she got even more furious and said: “Hey Kṛṣṇa! What are you doing here? Why are you disturbing me? Go to our Yūtheśvarī Rādhārāṇī, she is waiting for you! Why have you come to me? I have no love for you and I am not interested in playing with you.”

Kṛṣṇa was surprised and he asked: “You have no love for me? Why do you always serve me then?” The *mañjarī* replied: “Because our Svāmīnī wants us to serve you. We are Rādhārāṇī’s maidservants, not yours. If you want us to serve you, then stay with Rādhārāṇī. If you want our love, then you have to be with her. Go to her! We do not have any independent desire for having *vilāsa* you.” Kṛṣṇa was really surprised and he went to Rādhārāṇī and told her: “Rādhē, you were absolutely right. Now I know my limits. I always thought I can bewilder anyone’s mind; that is why I am called Kṛṣṇa. I can attract anyone in the entire planetary system, but not these *mañjarīs*, because they are only attached to you, and not me. They love me and serve me because of you, Rādhē. I feel great happiness to see their mood of single-minded surrender and dedication to you, because they follow your desire, advice and instructions. They are the only ones who can make me happy by their unalloyed service to you.”

Anaṅga Mañjarī has this same mood because she is a *mañjarī*,<sup>25</sup> but at the same time she has another very special *nāyikā sakhī* mood, which resembles Rādhārāṇī’s, and she is also her sister. That is why she stands out as the most prominent among all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*.

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<sup>25</sup> According to Rūpa Goswāmī (RKGD 1.121) Anaṅga Mañjarī is a *parama-preṣṭha sakhī* and a *yūtheśvarī*, not a *mañjarī*. There is no *śāstric pramāṇa* to assert that she is a *mañjarī*.

When Kṛṣṇa came into her *kuñja*, Anaṅga Mañjarī was very happy, but the other young girls felt uncomfortable to see Kṛṣṇa, *rasāveśe cañcala cāhanī*, they started glancing at each other feeling insecure. They wondered why Kṛṣṇa had come alone without their Yūtheśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Seeing them feeling surprised and uneasy, Kṛṣṇa started talking to them: “Maybe all of you are surprised and wondering why I am here. Your beauty is attracting me from far. When a lotus or a rose is fully blooming and the aroma spreads all over, the trail of the aroma will drag others to them. I caught the scent of the fragrance of this flower from far away. I have sought the source of the fragrance and found it coming from you. That is why I am here.”

Rāmāi Thākura saw that, Kṛṣṇa, on seeing all the young girls in front of him, started beautifying himself mystically to attract their attention. He is capable of manifesting his beauty immediately. In Veṇu Gītā he displayed this power. When the *gopīs* began to describe Kṛṣṇa’s beauty, *barhāpīḍam naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ*, they discussed amongst themselves: “O *sakhī*, look at Kṛṣṇa! Today he has a very special form. He has manifested the very unique form of an expert *nata-vara-vapu*, dancer. All his decorations and even his figure has changed.” One *sakhī* asked: “Why is he doing this?” Another *sakhī* said: “Maybe he has come with some special plan. He came to the forest to attract and steal our hearts and minds and tie us, just as he ties small calves. He has a rope tied around his head. With this rope he will tie our hearts and take them with him. Just to attract our minds he is exhibiting this special form, as a dancer. Today he is not walking normally. Every step of his is like a dance and his speech is like a song.”

Kṛṣṇa has the ability to exhibit different forms as and when he likes, according to circumstances. When he came in front of these very beautiful young *mañjarīs*, he tried to attract their minds by demonstrating a new appearance.

Rāmāi Thākura was surprised to see Kṛṣṇa changing his form from *śyāmasundara tanu* to a dancer to attract and trick these young girls. Suddenly it was like seeing light in darkness. Kṛṣṇa changed his form from black to effulgent Śyāma. There was now a sweet fragrance and effulgence radiating from his black form.

Rāmāi Thākura continues his description of Kṛṣṇa’s meeting with Anaṅga Mañjarī. Kṛṣṇa was mesmerised by Anaṅga’s beauty and desired to enjoy with her as he did with her elder sister, Rādhā. Using charming words, he was trying his best to attract her attention. He is expert in word-play and

he knows how to manage the emotions of young girls, so he started to confess his love and started glorifying her qualities and beauty.

“O Anaṅga, I have something to confess. Seeing you, I do not understand why I feel so attracted to your beauty, and I am feeling for you just what I feel for your sister, Rādhā. For a moment I thought that you were her. Anaṅga, do you know your toenails shine like jewels? The beautiful glow that emanates from your toenails destroys all the darkness in my heart. When you looked at me, I felt my heart pierced by your arrow-like glance. O Anaṅga! All the parts of your body are attracting me. Please accept me as your servant and let me serve you.”

śrūyatām devī dāsasya dainya bhāvaṁ sakātaram  
kṛpayā te suhrdāya dehi hi yugalaṁ phalaṁ (31)

“O Goddess! Please hear the humble plea of your servant, anxiously begging you. Please give me this pair of ‘fruits’ who are your heart-friends.” (Bhajana Candrikā)

### Commentary:

Now he proceeds in his attempts to lure her more seriously with even more appealing words and demands. He started addressing her as Devī: “O Devī, please listen to my words.” He has now humbled himself as a *dāsa*; he is addressing himself as her servant. “I am offering my words as *pūjā*. They are prayers from my heart to you. Right now, there is nothing else more desirable for me than you.”

“O Devī, please listen to your servant. I am requesting with a humble plea. Your beauty has destroyed my ego. I had big pride thinking that I am the most attractive person in the three worlds and that I could easily allure all young girls to fall prey to my charm and beauty. I now realize that it was my false ego. I am now desperately begging to serve you. I admit that everything that you possess – your beauty, qualities, intelligence – is far superior to mine. So, please Devī, accept me as your servant and order me to serve you. I am pleading with all humility.”

Anaṅga Mañjarī is also very intelligent. She is very similar to Rādhārāṇī. She knows how expert Kṛṣṇa is with word jugglery when he flirts with girls. His sweet words are just momentary. By listening to his words, any innocent and pure girl’s heart would melt. After stealing her heart, the debauchee takes off and looks for another prey.

Rādhārāṇī knows that whenever Kṛṣṇa says something, he never keeps his promise, as this has happened too many times. Kṛṣṇa would request Rādhārāṇī to wait for him in her *kuñja*. She makes all special arrangements for his arrival with her *sakhīs*. They decorate the *kuñja*, prepare nice food items that Kṛṣṇa likes and they wait the whole night, but Kṛṣṇa never turns up. Still, Rādhārāṇī's unflinching love never gives up on him. Though sometimes doubts do arise, whether he will keep his promise after many disappointments. Whenever Kṛṣṇa makes any promise to meet, the *sakhīs* ask him: "Kṛṣṇa, will you really come or will you repeat the same blunder like the last time?" Rādhārāṇī will immediately stop them and defend Kṛṣṇa, saying: "No! No! He will definitely come. I know he will come."

Kṛṣṇa's words have such power that they make anyone who listens to him melt and forget all his past misdeeds. Kṛṣṇa knows he is always at an advantage with his soft-hearted *sakhīs* and keeps repeating all his misdeeds. Sometimes after waiting the whole night, Rādhārāṇī will be very furious with Kṛṣṇa after hearing from her *sakhīs* that Kṛṣṇa was in Candrāvalī's *kuñja*. In the morning Kṛṣṇa will come to meet her with all the visible signs that he had spent the night with someone else. Sometimes in his haste he would come draped in Candrāvalī's sari by mistake, and Rādhārāṇī's *sakhīs* would ask him: "Oh Kṛṣṇa, how come you are wearing blue cloth?" Then he would start lying: "Oh Rādhe, it was yellow, but the whole night I was roaming around looking for your *kuñja*, deeply immersed in thoughts of you, and thus my yellow cloth turned blue." They know he is lying and Lalitā *sakhī* would push him out of the *kuñja*.

However, after sometime Rādhārāṇī would start crying for Kṛṣṇa. Viśākhā *sakhī* will then go in search of Kṛṣṇa and find him not too far away waiting. He knows, somebody will come to take him back into the *kuñja*. This has happens repeatedly. He does this especially to Rādhārāṇī.

Candrāvalī and the other *sakhīs* know Kṛṣṇa loves Rādhārāṇī the most, and she is priority for him above all others. If they catch Kṛṣṇa anywhere on the way to Rādhārāṇī's *kuñja*, they will try their best to lure him into their own *kuñja*. In *niśa-vihar*, the night *līlā-kirtans*, there are many delightful *kirtans* of Candrāvalī pleading with Kṛṣṇa: "Hey Kṛṣṇa! Daily you go to Rādhārāṇī's *kuñja*. Please offer me this one chance to serve you just for few moments. I promise not to keep you the whole night. I have made some nice preparations for you. Please accept them, and then you are free to go." Kṛṣṇa feels obliged to accept her offer and enters her *kuñja* and once inside, he is caught in her trap for the whole night. So, all the other rival *sakhīs* know that having Kṛṣṇa to themselves is just a stroke of luck. But it

is not the case with Rādhārāṇī. She cannot live a single moment without Kṛṣṇa. Whenever Kṛṣṇa tells her: “Oh Rādhē, I will come.” From that moment she starts thinking about their meeting.

Kṛṣṇa simply has to come before Rādhārāṇī and say some sweet words, and she will forgive and forget all his faults. Kṛṣṇa repeats this tricky play again and again with them and now he is trying the same with Anaṅga Mañjarī.

In the beginning, Rāmāi Ṭhākura used the word *sahasa*. Kṛṣṇa came there unexpectedly, but later he realised it was not unexpectedly. Kṛṣṇa came there deliberately to see Anaṅga Mañjarī. He knew that Rādhārāṇī was somewhere else and Anaṅga Mañjarī would be alone in her *kuñja* with her *sakhīs* so he went there.

Then he started saying: “O Devī, can I request something from you?” By this time Anaṅga Mañjarī was beginning to melt, and at the same time she was puzzled as to why Kṛṣṇa was saying he wanted to be her servant. “Is he saying he is mesmerised by my beauty with some ulterior motive?” So, she looked at Kṛṣṇa and asked him: “What do you want from me?” He smiled shyly and said, *kṛpayā te suhrdāya dehi hi yugalaṁ phalam*, “can you please give me your two fruits, who are your very dear and near friends?” Anaṅga Mañjarī was shocked and exclaimed: “Hey Kṛṣṇa, do you know what you are asking for?” Kṛṣṇa said: “Yes, I know what I am asking for.”

madane cañcala mana, dainya bhāva ācaraṇa,  
kohe kānu gadagada ākhyāna  
tava kañculikāñcala, yugala dāḍimī phala,  
niṣkapaṭe deho dhanī dāna (32)

“With his mind whirling with amorous feelings, Kānu humbled himself and pleaded earnestly: “Please offer me those two beautiful pomegranate fruits which are inside your *kañculi*.”

### Commentary:

Kṛṣṇa says: “Please, fulfil my request, *madane cañcala mana*; my mind is agitated and is restlessly roaming all over your overwhelmingly beautiful form. It’s not just me Anaṅga! I can assure you that if I can feel this way, then every other male in this universe will also be maddened by the beauty of your form.”

“Hey Devī! Every part of your body is very special, it is a *parājayati* form (defeating description). Inside your *kañculi* (blouse), your beautiful

firm rounded breasts are not ordinary; they are two beautiful, nectar-like pomegranate fruits. Your eyes are not just ordinary eyes, they are like *padma-pelaṣi-locana*, lotus petals. As for your bodily effulgence, it is as bright as molten gold. That is why my mind is attracted to have something from this *parājavati* form.”

Here Rāmāi Thākura referred to Kṛṣṇa, as Kanu. Kanai or Kanu means naughty boy in Bengali. *Ohe kānu gadagada ākhyāna*. now Kanu has fallen madly in love and is intoxicated with Anaṅga Mañjarī in the same way that he is with Rādhārāṇī.

“Hey Devī! I am feeling this deep longing for you. My mind is now *cañcala*, agitated. My irrepressible desire is like a ferocious caged animal. It is for this reason I am asking you to offer me that part of your body which is most attractive. I need these close friends of yours. I know that they are very near and dear friends of yours.”

Anaṅga, showing false resentment asked, “Why do you want to have my friends?” “O Devī, can’t you understand how much I long to serve you? I am your servant. If I need to serve you, I have to know you and only someone who is very near and dear to you can reveal your desires to me. You must know this is the process of *sādhana*.”

Here, Kṛṣṇa is trying to use the excuse of the proper technique to perform *sādhana*, to make Anaṅga Mañjarī understand why he needs her pomegranates. He said one has to take shelter of the close associates of one’s *iṣṭadeva* to serve him or her. Here, Kṛṣṇa is telling her that he needs the association of her two pomegranates to guide him in his service to her. If we want to serve Kṛṣṇa, we cannot go directly to him, as we do not have any knowledge about him or what he likes. So, we have to go to someone who is a very close associate of Kṛṣṇa, who knows all about him and can show us the right way to serve him. The closest person to Kṛṣṇa for us is Śrī gurudeva. That is the correct process of offering service. We must offer service, keeping in mind what is favourable and what is unfavourable.

Kṛṣṇa is trying to indirectly hint to Anaṅga Mañjarī that she should allow him to follow the proper process of offering service to her. “Devī, my desire to serve you is inspired by the light from your *nakra-candra*, the arrow from the glance of your eyes. It destroyed all my ignorance and my false ego. That’s why, I am very humbly begging you to allow me to serve you. I need to know your likes and dislikes. I want to know how you will be pleased. So, I need your pomegranate friends, to guide me as I know they are your *suhṛdaya*, your dearest and nearest ones, *kucha kula śobhita*. That is why you

are decorating them with your *mukta hara*, pearl necklace and with jewels and ornaments.

yadi bolo tumi dhanī, era yogya naha tumi,  
 āmi hoi rājāra nandinī  
 dātā hoy yei jane, pātrāpātra nāhi māne  
 vicāra koroho mora vāṇī (33)

“You may say that you are a princess and I am unworthy of getting these two fruits of yours. But do consider that real donors do not distinguish between who is worthy or unworthy.”

### Commentary:

“Devī, I know you can tell me that I am unworthy of asking you to have this. I am a cowherd boy and you are the daughter of a king, *rāja-nandini*. I know that I am a foolish cowherd boy, who knows nothing other than my expertise in flute playing. But whoever has a big heart distributes everything, they give to everyone without considering any qualifications.”

In Dvāpara-yuga Kṛṣṇa distributed his prema only to his eternal associates. He did not distributed his prema outside of Vraja. Still we are glorifying Kṛṣṇa as *dātā-śiromani*, but he was not exactly magnanimous. Our Mahāprabhu is actually the *dātā-śiromani*. There was no consideration of qualification in his generously distributing his prema.

Rūpa Goswāmī described Kṛṣṇa’s qualities in this *śloka*:

anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau  
 samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam  
 hariḥ purāṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba sandīpitaḥ  
 sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah

“May Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, be forever manifest within the innermost core of your heart. He has descended in the age of Kali, out of causeless mercy, to bestow that which had not been given before, *unnatojjvala-rasa*, the most elevated, purest love for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. (Vidagdha-Mādhava 1.2/ CC Ādi-līlā, 1.4)

The cause of his appearance is to distribute *unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam*. He is distributing everything of himself and his prema to everyone



and everything. The living and even non-living entities like stones also received prema from Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Here, Kṛṣṇa is saying to Anaṅga Mañjarī: “Hey Devī! A big-hearted donor does not distinguish between who is qualified or unqualified. You are a big-hearted donor, so please do not consider my disqualification. Please think about what I have said.”

dāna dile duhka mana, nahe kuṇṭha mahājana,  
para duḥka duḥka kore nāśa  
puṭāñjalī cātu-vāṇāī, śuni rādhāra vahinī  
samvariyā rahe kṛṣṇa pāśa (34)

“Great donors are very compassionate to the needy. They only desire to eliminate the sufferings of the needy.” Hearing these pathetic pleading words spoken with folded hands, Rādhā’s sister stood motionless by Kṛṣṇa’s side.”

### Commentary:

Kṛṣṇa continues his plea: “Those who are *mahājanas*, very big donors, do not lament after donating. Devī, if you donate something of yourself which will extinguish another’s pain, it will at the same time remove the desire which you have in your heart. So, please think about this. I want to serve your desire, remove your pain, and fulfil your desire. I am not asking this of you out of lust. You may think that I desire your breasts. No! No! It is not like that. For me they are your dear friends. I am not feeling anything bad about this; I only want to serve you. That is why, I am begging you humbly. By obtaining your pomegranates, this pain in my heart will vanish and my happiness will destroy your pain. So, please Devī, I am begging you!”

Now Kṛṣṇa’s tricky words are beginning to work. Here, Rāmāī Thākura is using the word *rādhāra-vahini*, Rādhā’s sister. Hearing all that Kṛṣṇa said, Anaṅga started thinking in her heart without voicing anything to him, “Oh Kṛṣṇa, do you really love me in the same way that you love my elder sister?” She starts melting with compassion because she is Rādhārāṇī’s sister, *rādhā vahini*. Now, her mind is with Kṛṣṇa. She has started to fall into the trap of Kṛṣṇa’s sweet words. His flattering and flirting has started to work on her soft heart. So, just like Rādhārāṇī, she begins to open up her compassionate heart to him.

Kṛṣṇa is delighted by her response, and he continues to glorify her:

lakṣmī ādi susundarī, svarga-vāsī deva nārī  
 naranārī koto śata āra  
 śyāmalā kamalā kori, candrā bhadrā ādi nārī,  
 hoite mahimā tomāra (35)

“What to speak of the beautiful damsels of this world, you are even more beautiful than Lakṣmī and all the beautiful goddesses in heaven. Your glories defeat even that of Śyāmalā, Kamalā, Candrā and Bhadrā.”

### Commentary:

“Hey Devī! You are incomparable! I have seen so many ladies. I know Lakṣmī Devī and all the beautiful Goddesses, who live in heaven. I have seen so many stars, who are the beautiful wives of Candra, but even Lakṣmī Devī is not equal to you in beauty. You are the topmost of all the beautiful damsels.”

Listening to all these sweet glories about herself from Kṛṣṇa, Anaṅga Mañjarī became somewhat convinced and her resistance was melting down. Kṛṣṇa took great effort in his attempt to attract Anaṅga Mañjarī with very eloquent words. Finally, to persuade her to surrender her two beautiful pomegranates to him, he gave her special *śikṣā* on *sādhana-siddhānta*.

He knows that by his beauty alone he can never convince any *mañjarī*. All the *mañjarīs* are attached to Rādhārāṇī more than to him. Kṛṣṇa was hopeful that by his words he could melt her heart since she is soft-hearted and very compassionate like Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa is expert in the art of wooing. He is expert in appeasing, persuading and pleasing his beloveds with words. He is the master of the three stages of this art as depicted in the *rasa-śāstras*. The three stages are: *sāma*, *dāna* and *bheda* (flattering, rewarding, dividing). These three steps are a natural process that occurs in dealings of love affairs. First is *sāma*, the art of glorifying. It is natural for girls to expect flattering of their looks and their decorations by their lovers.

Second is *dāna*, which means gifts. They are extremely pleased to receive gifts. The third is *bheda*. They must be made to feel that they are the best, the most outstanding amongst others. Such comparison to others must be revealed to them privately.

Using this process, Kṛṣṇa hoped that Anaṅga would soon surrender to him. Although she was still silent after hearing all his sweet words, within her mind and heart she had already fallen for his trap. There is another rule in the art of love affairs. That is, as long as the girl does not speak, a cultured

gentleman will not proceed further. He will wait till she gives her consent through words.

In Ujjvala-Nīlamanī, we will find that most of Rūpa Gosvāmī's description of the different stages of prema is based on the *rasa-śāstras*. He has clearly explained the different stages of *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* and *mahā-bhāva* based on these *śāstras*. Kṛṣṇa, who is the master of all *rasas*, initiated these processes by his activities and everyone is following him.

By now Anaṅga Mañjarī had already fallen for Kṛṣṇa, but still could not bring herself to assent with words, as she was still feeling very confused. Her main hesitation was that she knew that Kṛṣṇa is Rādhārāṇī's property and nobody else's. Now Kṛṣṇa had come to her and was expressing his love with such sweet words. She was now wondering whether Kṛṣṇa did have the same love for her, as he had for Rādhārāṇī? She had still not uttered a single word to Kṛṣṇa and that was holding him back from making any further advances. He was still not convinced that he had already won her over with his sweet talk. So, he again continued his sweet flattering. How Kṛṣṇa continues to offer his flirtatious praises and bring her to the point of completely surrendering to him, we will hear in the following verses.

rādhikā tomāra jyeṣṭhā, tumi tāra kaniṣṭhā  
rādhā mora prāṇera samāna  
tāhāte adhika tumi, ki āra bolibo āmi  
ihā jāni koroho samāna (36)

“I know that Rādhikā is your elder sister and you are her younger. Rādhā is my life and soul but you are even greater than her to me. What more can I say? Knowing this, please honour me with your love.”

### Commentary:

“Anaṅga, I know you must be hesitating because Rādhā is your elder sister. Do you know that Rādhā has always been my life and soul and I love her more than anyone else. But right now, I vouch this truth from my heart that you are even greater than her and my love for you is even above hers.”

After using *sāma*, glorifying her beauty as being the best amongst all, he used *dāna*, offering himself at her lotus feet. When nothing worked, he tried the last trick, *bheda*, the art of making her feel exceptional by comparing his love for her with his love for Rādhārāṇī.

“I say this sincerely that I love Rādhā more than anyone, but you are greater than Rādhā. What more can I say? Please do not think I am exaggerating. You do have such qualities. I cannot express this with words. You can realize this just by looking at me.”

By now, Kṛṣṇa managed a few drops of tears to dribble down from his eyes to portray his sincerity.

“I am at a loss for words to express your *guṇa*, qualities, and your *rūpa*, beauty. I am not qualified to describe your glories with mere words. I know that even the greatest poets will fail in their attempts to express your glories with adequate words. I have nothing to say anymore. I am offering everything of myself to you. I know you love your elder sister Rādhā more than anyone in this world, and I feel the same way too. But now I realize that I love you more than her. I have nothing more to say, so I leave you to decide.”

vrajāṅganā ādi kori, āche koto yogya nārī  
rādhā sarva hoy śiromaṇi  
ei sabhā hoite śuno, ki kohibo puna puna  
tomā sarva guṇete vākhāni (37)

“Among all the beautiful damsels of Vraja, Rādhā is the crest jewel of all of them. But I am repeating this to you again, that amongst all of them, you are the greatest.”

### Commentary:

“Here in Vraja there are so many *vrajāṅganās* (beautiful *gopīs* of Vraja). All of them have superb qualities. They are the best in all the planetary systems. But Rādhā is the crown jewel amongst them all, she is *śreṣṭha*, the topmost. I know all the *vrajāṅganās* personally, but now after seeing you, I can say that you are the chief after comparing you with each and every one of them.”

Anaṅga Mañjarī became completely puzzled. She felt like asking him: “Just by spending a few moments with me, you can compare me with everyone else, even my beloved sister?” But she did not have the courage to ask him because she was confused as to why Kṛṣṇa was repeating this again and again. Her innocent mind started to wonder if he really meant what he was saying.

rādhikāyā kaniṣṭhā tvam jyeṣṭhā rādhā tava priyā  
viddhi maṁ rādhikā dāsam ataeva kṛpāṁ kuru (38)

“Because you are Rādhikā’s younger sister, she is your dearly beloved. Therefore, please give me your mercy and accept me, knowing me to be her servant.” (Bhajana Candrikā)

**Commentary:**

Now Kṛṣṇa is trying another trick. He said: “O Anaṅga! Will you not accept me? Are you not satisfied with me? O Devī! I know that you have so much love for your sister. Therefore, please be merciful unto me and bless me as I am a servant of Rādhā.”

Why did Kṛṣṇa say that “I am Rādhā’s dā’sa?” He actually meant to say that if Rādhārāṇī is accepting his service then there should be no problem for Anaṅga to accept his service as well.

tava priyoftama rādhā, ghucāya monera bādhā  
nija dāsa kori more māne  
se sambandha dhani citte, koribe āmāra hite,  
ithe dukha adhika vā kene (39)

“Your dear Rādhā accepts me as her servant and removes all my anxiety. So please remove all the confusion in your mind and accept me as she does. This will be very beneficial for me, so why are you feeling distressed?”

**Commentary:**

“I know why you are hesitating to accept me as your servant. You are totally dedicated to Rādhā and you will not do anything without her approval or instructions. Please relieve my mental anxiety by considering me your servant. Just see how Rādhikā eradicates all the darkness from my heart. All I need to do is to just go in front of her and the darkness and pain in my heart disappears.”

In Gītā Govinda we can see that Kṛṣṇa was using these same tricky words with Rādhārāṇī:

smara garala khaṇḍanam mama śīrasi maṇḍanam  
dehi pada-pallavam udāram

“O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, I am burning in the fire of separation from you. Please be merciful to Me and decorate My head with the foot-dust of Your lotus feet to relieve Me from this burning poison of Cupid.” (Śrī Gīta-Govinda 10.8)

After cheating on Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa came to her and took her lotus feet in his hands and prayed with tears in his eyes: “O Rādhē, please put your lotus feet on my head.” The *sakhīs* asked him why he wanted her to do so after causing her so much pain?

He said: “The lotus feet of Rādhārāṇī are *smara garala khaṇḍanam*. Whenever I drink the poison of lust, placing her lotus feet on my head removes that poison from my heart. I become purified from all my offences to her. Her lotus feet are the adorning beauty of my head. Everyone can say, that the crown on my head looks very nice. But the real fact is that the crowning glory of my head is Rādhā’s lotus feet.”

“I want to advertise this crowning glory of your lotus feet to everyone. Please place your lotus feet on my head.” The last lie of his, is the most impressive; it is above even *rasa-śāstras*. *dehi pada-pallavam udāraṁ*, he compared her lotus feet to a *pada-pallavam*, which means a creeper, *latā*.

In *rasa-śāstras* we will never find the feet, or legs or hands compared to a creeper. Sometimes hand, but never legs. But Kṛṣṇa said, “O Rādhē! Your lotus feet are like a creeper. Do you know why I want you to place your creeper-like feet on my head? Because I have a snake in my heart, and whenever this snake crawls out, it drives me to another path away from you. Whenever I meet Candrāvalī, Śyāmalā, Citra or others, you must know that I am not going to them by my will. It is this snake that is driving me there. So Rādhē, you have to kill that lusty snake. Do you know how snakes are killed by experts? They place creepers on the top of a snake’s hole. When the snake tries to come out, it will be pricked by the thorny creeper, like a needle. It will be forced to go inside the hole again, and when it gets hungry, it will try to come out. After trying many times repeatedly, it will fail and eventually it will starve to death. The entry to the snake hole of my heart is here on my head. So, I am begging you to please place your creeper like lotus feet on my head, to kill the snake of my lust.”

This is a very powerful tricky pretext, which will certainly bewilder the mind of any girl. She immediately forgets all past misdeeds and offers herself to him. Kṛṣṇa knows this very well, as he is the supreme *rasika śekhara* (relisher of *rasa*). This submissive quality of Kṛṣṇa is mentioned in Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu as that of a *dhira-Lalitā-nāyaka*. His other nature, as a debauchee, is that of a *lampata-nāyaka*.

“Why are you still hesitating to accept me? If your sister has accepted me, you too should accept me without any doubts. I know the best way to serve her and will do the same for you too, Anaṅga!”

nānā narma ukti kofo, anaṅge ākula cita,  
 kānu cāṭukāra dhanī āge  
 vibholahoilo mana, nāhi hoy samvaraṇa,  
 rahe kṛṣṇa pāiyā manodvege (40)

“Kānu spoke many sweet flattering words to convince Anaṅga. His heart was agitated and he was unable to control his maddened mind.”

### Commentary:

At this point Anaṅga Mañjarī’s heart was almost convinced just as any girl would be after so much flattering with sweet tricky eloquent words. He had expressed and shown his love for her abundantly, even beyond the guidelines of *rasa-śāstras*. She was falling for his tricks, forgetting all his past history of cheating Rādhārāṇī. She forgot completely how he did the same with Rādhārāṇī, glorifying her as the best and the next moment flirting with some other girl.

She remembered her *yūtheśvar*’s (Rādhā) instructions to serve Kṛṣṇa as he desires. She had said that Anaṅga should give him whatever he requested whenever he came to her. But her dilemma was that she doubted whether her sister had meant that she should respond to his desires to have a loving intimate relationship with him. Should she succumb to such a request? He had gone beyond all limits in his request. He was adamant to have her pomegranates. What should she do? She wondered whether her sister had ever imagined that Kṛṣṇa would make such advances on her and whether this behaviour of his was acceptable to her. Then again, she was puzzled as to why Rādhārāṇī, knowing well about Kṛṣṇa’s flirtatious nature, did not caution her about the limits of the particular services she should offer him. Anaṅga was deeply pondering these thoughts in dismay.

heno kāle rādhā tathā, lalitā campakalatā,  
 viśākhādi yoto sakhī gana  
 kamala nayana kṛṣṇa, anaṅgete satṛṇṇa  
 dekhi sabhe harṣa duḥkha mana (41)

“At that moment, Rādhā, Lalitā, Campakalatā, Viśākhā, and all the other *sakhīs* arrived there. Seeing Kṛṣṇa agitated with lusty desires for Anaṅga, they were overcome with mixed feelings of happiness and disappointment.”

**Commentary:**

When Rādhārāṇī suddenly appeared there with Lalitā, Campakalatā, Viśākhā, and all the other *sakhīs*, Kṛṣṇa was shocked to see them and was particularly nervous looking at Lalitā *sakhī*, since she never spared him her harsh words. The *sakhīs*' faces showed different expressions of mixed feelings. They were happy to see Anaṅga Mañjarī with her *sakhīs*, but at the same time, disappointed to see lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa agitated with lusty desires. They knew he was up to something mischievous.

Among all the *sakhīs* who were with Rādhārāṇī, only one was in Kṛṣṇa's favour, and that was Viśākhā *sakhī*. The rest of them like Lalitā and Campakalatā, were all in favour of Rādhārāṇī.

Rādhārāṇī knows the heart of Anaṅga Mañjarī and at the same time she knows how obstinate Kṛṣṇa can be, when he desires something.

anaṅga mañjarī prati, madhura vacana ati,  
kohe rādhā sucandra vadanī  
indra nīlamaṇi śyāme, tāhāte emana kene,  
hoiyāche dosara parānī (42)

“Moonfaced Rādhā then spoke to Anaṅga Mañjarī in a very sweet tone: ‘Oh faultless one, how did you get so intimately involved with this Indra-Nīlamaṇi Śyāma?’”

**Commentary:**

Rādhārāṇī is always charming and delightful with her moon like sweet and happy face. Whenever she is angry, only Kṛṣṇa and her intimate *sakhīs* can sense it; no one else. All others will only see her moon-like happy face.

Rādhārāṇī then started teasing her sister: “O Anaṅga! How did you acquire this Indra-Nīlamaṇi? Since when did you start feeling for him such loving sentiments? You have attracted him with so much love that he has now fallen prey to your charms! All the while I thought Kṛṣṇa was only my property but now I see that his love is divided. When did such feelings arise in your heart Anaṅga?”

Anaṅga Mañjarī was thunder-struck upon hearing Rādhārāṇī's pinching words. She felt like a total offender and a betrayer. To hear these kind of words from Rādhārāṇī was the most painful thing not only for Anaṅga, but for all the other *mañjarīs* as well. It is never their intention to betray her at any cost. Anaṅga Mañjarī's loyalty to Rādhārāṇī is the purest



amongst all the *mañjarīs*. These words of Rādhārāṇī were like a knife striking her soft heart. This time she was caught in a very complicated and devastating situation. She was speechless, as she could not deny to Rādhārāṇī that she was not in love with Kṛṣṇa and neither could she blame him for flirting with her.

Anaṅga thought Rādhārāṇī would ask her why she had allowed Kṛṣṇa to flirt with her with such intimacy. If she had no such desire, then why had she not asked him to leave immediately? Anaṅga felt that Rādhārāṇī had the right to ask her such questions as she had encouraged him to persist without protesting against his flirtatious intentions. She could have chased him away with all her *sakhīs*, but why had she not done so?

“What answer will I give to my sister over this fault of mine? She has caught me red-handed standing in close proximity to the extent of inspiring him to embrace me.”

Anaṅga Mañjarī’s mind was spinning with various speculations as to what was going through Rādhārāṇī’s mind. She even began to suspect that her sister had sent Kṛṣṇa to test if she was truly dedicated to her. All these thoughts started racing through Anaṅga Mañjarī’s mind as soon as Rādhārāṇī asked: “O Anaṅga how did you manage to attract the attention of this blue sapphire jewel, who is mine?” Rādhārāṇī was looking at both of them, while she was speaking. Her question was not only for Anaṅga, but also for Kṛṣṇa. Both Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga were speechless and had their own speculations. Kṛṣṇa was surprised and at the same time afraid. His fear was not so much of Rādhārāṇī but of the *sakhīs*, especially Lalitā *sakhī*, as she never spared him her reprimands. He felt guilty, because she had caught him red-handed. Usually, Rādhārāṇī only hears that Kṛṣṇa has gone somewhere else to enjoy with Candrāvalī or to another rival *sakhīs’ kuñja*, but this time it was with her own sister. Kṛṣṇa may have a guilty conscience but not Anaṅga Mañjarī. Until now she had not replied to Kṛṣṇa despite hearing all his flattering words. When he tried to hold her hand, she had pushed him away. So Anaṅga Mañjarī was not feeling guilty, but she was totally confused about what was happening. First, Kṛṣṇa came to her and confessed his love for her and now her elder sister appears on the scene catching them together. Was this their plan?

Rādhārāṇī concealed her mood. No one could understand what was going on in her mind. As for the *sakhīs*, they had mixed feelings. They were happy and at the same time disturbed. They like to see Kṛṣṇa in a hankering mood for Rādhārāṇī, so now they were upset that he was lusting after her sister. Everyone was anxious to see what Rādhārāṇī’s verdict would be over

this affair. Would she punish Anaṅga, or Kṛṣṇa, or both of them? A big surprise was waiting for everyone.

Rādhārāṇī is very kind and affectionate to Anaṅga Mañjarī and loves her younger sister dearly. She said: “Do you know Anaṅga, how difficult it was for me to get this Śyāma-jewel? I had to struggle so much. You cannot imagine what I have to do to get him, but even then, I have not got him completely. So many times, I have waited for him the whole night but he never appeared. He has broken my heart countless times. He has never been faithful to me. If he was, he would never have betrayed me. But Anaṅga, you are so fortunate. Kṛṣṇa came to you without your invitation. You are more fortunate than me. Now you too have the same duty to please him like me.”

Without uttering any word, Anaṅga Mañjarī looked deep into Rādhārāṇī’s eyes revealing her heart through her tear-filled eyes. Her eyes were pleading: “Oh Rādhē, I love you so much and would do anything to please you. You know me better than anyone. I have always obeyed your instructions without any compromise. You are not just my beloved sister for whom I would give up my life, but I also see you as my Svāminī, my worshipable Goddess.”

Just by looking into Rādhārāṇī’s eyes, she was revealing her heart and all her thoughts, asking her beloved sister with a surrendered mood, what she should do next. She was prepared to do anything that Rādhārāṇī would order her to do, with single-minded surrender.

What will Rādhārāṇī’s reaction be to this? Is she really disappointed with Anaṅga Mañjarī? Will she punish Kṛṣṇa for flirting with her innocent younger sister? Or, will she react in an unexpected manner towards both of them?

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is going to start relating the pastime of their meeting, which is a great suspense. What will be the outcome of this affair between Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī?

yadi mora bola dhara, nāgara santoṣa koro,  
śuno prāṇa anaṅga mañjarī  
eto kohi ālīṅgiyā, vadane vadana diyā  
kohilā aneka yatna kori (43)

“Oh my dearest Anaṅga Mañjarī, please hear my words: ‘Satisfy this romantic hero!’ Saying this, she lovingly embraced her younger sister and held her face close to hers.”

**Commentary:**

Rādhārāṇī could sense that Anaṅga Mañjarī was extremely confused and was at the same time feeling fear in her heart, so she was unable to decide what to do. But Rādhārāṇī, without any reservations, whole-heartedly accepted Kṛṣṇa's desire to enjoy with her younger sister. She knew that she had to first wipe out this fear from her sister's heart. Anaṅga will never be able to please Kṛṣṇa to his full satisfaction if she has fear in her heart. This will create an obstacle to their pleasure. So, to remove the fear from Anaṅga Mañjarī's heart, Rādhārāṇī carefully and lovingly embraced her sweet, innocent, darling younger sister, placing her head close to her chest. Then she looked into her eyes and said: "You are truly very fortunate and I am very proud of you my darling sister. Often my *sakhīs* would tell me that, 'Your sister has the same qualities as you.' Some of them would even say that maybe she has more qualities than me. Now I realize that they were absolutely right. You have better qualities than me. That is why Kṛṣṇa came to you. You never had such intentions as you were always so loyal to me. Kṛṣṇa has come to you not just because of his attraction for your external beauty. He is attracted to the purity of your prema. He is just like the honey bee that is always hankering for honey. Bees usually drink honey from flowers that have already bloomed. But Kṛṣṇa, the chief of all honeybees, has the quality of extracting honey from a flower that has not fully blossomed. He found that honey hidden within your heart, and that is why he came to you. So, now it is your duty to please Kṛṣṇa. If you are worried about how I will feel, then I assure you, that I will be very pleased and it will give me great pleasure. I derive more pleasure seeing you with Kṛṣṇa instead of me. Please satisfy this hero for my sake! O Anaṅga, you are not only my younger sister, but you are also my dear most intimate friend. You have this ability to please Kṛṣṇa. So, go on my dear one, and do it now with my blessings. If he will be satisfied with you, it will be my greatest happiness."

lalitā sundarī āsi, mucaki mucaki hāsi,  
 anaṅga mañjarī mukha cāi  
 rasika nāgara śyāme, paritoṣa koro rāme,  
 tabe āmi boḍo sukha pāi (44)

"Lalitā Sundarī then came forward with a teasing smile and said: 'Oh my dear one! Satisfy this *rasika nāgara* and this will make me very happy.'"

**Commentary:**

After Rādhārāṇī, Lalitā *sakhī* came forward. *Sakhīs* have a duty to guide their juniors. As an elder sister, Rādhārāṇī has her limits. In Indian culture, the older members of the family do not discuss intimate relationships with their younger ones. So, Rādhārāṇī could not guide Anaṅga further for what she had to do for Kṛṣṇa. Now, Lalitājī, who is a very intimate *sakhī* of both Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī, stepped forward to play her role. Although Kṛṣṇa was afraid that she might tell him off as usual, but at this point, he was too overwhelmed with his love for Anaṅga to worry about that. He could not keep his love for her hidden from anyone.

Lalitā *sakhī* came smiling to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Her smile was very special, as there was a hidden meaning: “Oh, both of you are having a love affair? All this while you were hiding your feelings that have now come to the open?” With this smile she said to Anaṅga: “O Anaṅga! You know Kṛṣṇa is a *rasika nāgara*. All the while you have been serving Kṛṣṇa for Rādhārāṇī’s pleasure. But now you have to play the role of a beloved. Kṛṣṇa loves pure condensed love, just like *khīra*. If you boil milk for a long time until no water remains, it will become very thick, such milk is very sweet. Kṛṣṇa enjoys such sweet *khīra*. He is *rasika śekhara* and *rasika nāgara*. If you can open his heart with your love, he will do everything for you. Win him over with your love first and he will be your slave. He enjoys the position of being subjugated by those who surrender their heart to him. He has such qualities that when he is *dhira-lalitā-nāyaka*, he enjoys being subordinate to his *priya*. He also has another quality of being *lampata-nāyaka*, a debauchee.”

“Now, just by looking at Kṛṣṇa I can feel what is going on in his heart. Viśākhā *sakhī* and I have this special ability to read Kṛṣṇa’s thoughts and heart. So Anaṅga, you have to get rid of all the fear in your heart and satisfy this *rasika nāgara*. Leave all your confusion and hesitation, and open your heart like a fully blossomed flower, ready for the bee to suck its honey. Do not cover it with any kind of doubt, fear or hesitation. He will only be fully satisfied if your heart is fully open to reciprocate with his love.”

“I know have all the qualities to please Kṛṣṇa.” Lalitā *sakhī* continued to advise Anaṅga Mañjarī to give up her fear and shyness. “From the time we came here I noticed that you are only looking at the ground. You should look at Kṛṣṇa. Without looking at him, how can you serve him? First you have to open your heart. Only then you can please him. O Anaṅga, if you can please Kṛṣṇa, then I too will be very happy, like Rādhārāṇī.”

eto kōhi mṛdu hāsi, heri kānu mukha śaśī,  
 nayana iṅgite kichu bole  
 tabe kṛṣṇa bujhi tattva, anaṅga mañjarī hasta  
 anaṅga kānane dhari cole (45)

“After saying this smilingly, she looked at Kṛṣṇa’s moon-like face and signalling with her eyes, she hinted something. Kṛṣṇa understood her indication, and taking Anaṅga’s hand, He walked towards her *kuñja* in the forest.”

### Commentary:

After saying this to Anaṅga Mañjarī, Lalitā *sakhī* gestured to Kṛṣṇa with a signal from her eye. It was an indication of approval for him. Kṛṣṇa was thrilled to receive the green light from Lalitā *sakhī*. Now all his fear and worries were over. A go-ahead signal from Lalitā *sakhī* means, no more obstacles. Bravely without hesitating, he held Anaṅga Mañjarī’s hands. For her, it was the first touch of her beloved and it raised a wave of thrilling ecstasy that made goosebumps (*romanca*) appear on her body. Kṛṣṇa has such an effect on anyone he touches; it is one of his special qualities.

In Veṇu Gītā there is a kirtan sung by the *vraja-gopīs*. They are praising *vrndāranyam*, the land of Vṛndāvana: *Vṛndāranyam sva-pada-ramaṇam prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ*. The land of Vṛndāvana is glorious because it is imprinted with Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. He entered the forest accompanied by his cowherd friends who were singing his glories.

Vṛndā Devī, who is a manifestation of Vṛndāvana’s Bhūmi Devī, is one of Kṛṣṇa’s *gopīs*, and she loves him in the mood of a beloved. During his pastimes as a young child, the *conjugal-bhāva* had not yet manifested in Kṛṣṇa, so he was unable to reciprocate with her love. After he reached the *kiśora* age, during his teenage, only then could he feel her love and reciprocate accordingly.

Once he came to the forest to meet the *vraja-gopīs* with his heart filled with *mādhurya-rasa*. At that moment he felt Vṛndā Devī’s love and he suddenly manifested a unique form as a skilled dancer. He started dancing to please Vṛndā Devī with the touch of his feet. She felt his love through the rhythm of his dancing feet. Through the touch of his feet, she could sense him saying: “O Vṛndā, I know how much you love me and how long you have waited for me to reciprocate. I am now offering my love to you through my feet.” Wherever his lotus feet touched the ground, a lotus appeared on that spot.

The gods were witnessing this beautiful *līlā*. They were very surprised to see the lotuses blooming on land. Why did the lotus, which only blooms in the water, bloom on the land? One of the Goddesses explained to them: “You have no knowledge about the symptoms of love. These are not any ordinary lotuses; they are goosebumps on Vṛndā Devī which have appeared as lotuses. She has just experienced the first touch of her lover’s feet and that has caused horripilation on her body, resulting in goosebumps appearing in the form of lotus flowers. It is a symptom of prema.

In the same manner, when Kṛṣṇa held Anaṅga Mañjarī’s hands, she too felt horripilation and goosebumps appeared on her body. She felt a thrilling sensation and she lost consciousness of her surroundings. They were in front of her Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja, and she was asking: “Where am I?” Suddenly, everything seemed to change in front of her.

The ambience and the beauty of Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja also changed. Lalitā *sakhī* ushered both of them into the *kuñja*. Kṛṣṇa took Anaṅga by her hand and walked into her *kuñja* and started showing her the beauty of her own *kuñja*.

This day was similar to *rāsa-līlā*. All the six seasons manifested their qualities simultaneously: *vasanta-ritu* - spring, *grisma* - summer, *varśa* - monsoon, *śārada* - autumn, *hemanta* – dewy season, and *śiśira* - winter. When Kṛṣṇa decided to unite with Anaṅga, all six seasons came to serve and please them both. Beautiful flowers and fruits of all seasons appeared. Peacocks were dancing (although they usually dance only in the rainy season). Kokila birds that sing only during the *vasanta*-season appeared, and each of them were performing and exhibiting its own talent; the male birds started to sing and suddenly night fell and the full moon rose in the sky. The whole *kuñja* was bathed in moonlight.

anaṅga ambuja sthāna, ratna vedi niramāṇa  
nānā puṣpa makaranda jhare  
saurabhe āmoda vana, kuṇḍa ati suśobhana,  
nīre padma bhramara guñjare (46)

“In Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja, there is a jewelled platform where there were many different kinds of flowers with honey dripping from them. There is a beautiful pond surrounded by an enchanting forest, a breeze heavy with the fragrance of these flowers, and bumblebees buzzing around the lotus flowers in the pond.”

### Commentary:

*Nānā puṣpa makaranda jhare*, it is uncommon for honey to drip from flowers. Usually we see honey dripping from a beehive. All unusual conditions were manifesting there for their *līlā*, so that Kṛṣṇa could show all these beauties to Anaṅga. This is part of *rasika-mīlana*; the stage of sweet meeting. Kṛṣṇa was strolling around the *kuñja* holding her hand in one hand, and with the other he was pointing out and touching all the flower vines. This was Kṛṣṇa's nature. He was always doing this, even when he went into the forest for cow crazing. He used to spread out his hands to touch all the creepers and they too would bow down and try to touch him. They would offer the fragrance of their flowers and honey to Kṛṣṇa's hands. Now he was doing the same thing while strolling with Anaṅga. He put his hand close to Anaṅga's nose and said: "Smell this, and see how nice it is." Then, he collected the honey and offered it on her tongue to enjoy the nectar-like taste.

It is the nature of a romantic lover to enjoy exchanging his love first before union. All these processes are mentioned in *rasa-śāstras*. That's why he is *rasika śekhara* (the relisher of amorous pastimes). It is natural for him to follow all these procedures. He pointed out beautiful flowers, saying: "Isn't this flower beautiful, Anaṅga?" She just looked at them with surprise, as she had never seen those flowers before; everything was completely new for her. Kṛṣṇa strolled along with her just like a tour guide in her own *kuñja*, showing her around, as they enjoyed each other's company with the exchange of a loving dialogue.

Kṛṣṇa: "Anaṅga! There is a very nice pond in your *kuñja* with a very nice sitting place on the bank of the pond."

Anaṅga: "Where did this pond come from and who decorated this pond so beautifully? It must be you Kṛṣṇa! I have never seen my *kuñja* looking so beautiful before."

Kṛṣṇa: "Have you not seen this flower before in your *kuñja*?"

Anaṅga: "No, Kṛṣṇa, this flower is exceptionally beautiful and its fragrance is unique. I have never smelt such a beautiful fragrance before. Although this *kuñja* is mine, everything here today is completely new to me. I am now here with you in a different mood. My whole *kuñja* has transformed into a new place with your presence. You see Kṛṣṇa, this flower is not of this season, but it has blossomed just now. I really do not know what to say as everything is a new experience for me."

Kṛṣṇa: "O Anaṅga, look at that marvellous pond with an opulent sitting place on its banks! Who decorated this pond so nicely?"

Anaṅga: “O Kṛṣṇa, you did all this. I have never seen such beauty in my *kuñja*. I have never seen all the bumblebees buzzing like this. They are not just buzzing! They are actually singing. Can you hear them Kṛṣṇa?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, Anaṅga, I can hear them singing. Do you know what they are singing about? I know the language of the bumblebees; they are glorifying you.”

Anaṅga: “Really Kṛṣṇa?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, Anaṅga, their songs are all glorifying you. Everything is so beautiful. See the cuckoos? They too are praising you in their singing, and all the creepers are also glorifying you. All the flowers have come here to worship you. I have never seen flowers dripping honey. Today I have tasted various kinds of honey from so many flowers.”

Then, both of them sat on the *ratna-vedi* (jewelled throne) on the bank of the pond.

tīre vṛkṣa latāgaṇa, phala phule suśobhana,  
malayā pavana suśītala  
nānā vṛkṣa nānā jāti, nānā latā nānā bhāti,  
manohara parama ujjvala (47)

“On the banks of the pond, there were trees and vines with ripe fruits and beautiful fragrant flowers, with a cool Malayan breeze blowing amidst the many different enchanting trees and vines which created a radiant atmosphere.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is describing the beauty of the garden in Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja, which he visualises in his heart. The name of Anaṅga Mañjarī’s *kuñja* is Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja which means “Cupid’s lotus.” Anaṅga means Kamadeva – Cupid, and Ambuja means lotus.

Kṛṣṇa: “Anaṅga, let’s take rest here, I know you are feeling tired. You can feel the gentle breeze from the Malayan mountain. The most gentle and cool air comes from the Malayan mountain. (Whenever cool air blows, it is always compared to Malayan breeze). Anaṅga, let’s take rest here in this nice place and enjoy the cool breeze surrounded by the trees and vines, which are full of fruits and flowers. Are you feeling hungry? I will pluck a mango from this tree. You can enjoy its nectarean taste.

Anaṅga felt very embarrassed. How could she eat the fruit in front of Kṛṣṇa? All her life she had only served him and Rādhārāṇī and eaten their



remnants. She took the mango from Kṛṣṇa and offered it to him first saying: “I’d like to take your prasāda.” Kṛṣṇa said: “Okay, we will taste this together.” He made a hole in the mango and sucked it and gave it to Anaṅga and she sucked it, Kṛṣṇa took it back from her and relished it. Anaṅga tried to stop him but he said: “Why not Anaṅga? In loving affairs there is no such difference of senior and junior. There is no place for seniority; we are both on the same platform. If you like my prasāda, then I too like your prasāda.” In this way they enjoyed the fruit together tasting each other’s remnants. Anaṅga was feeling so blissful in her heart. She had never experienced such happiness in her life. She was relishing every moment of Kṛṣṇa’s sweet association.

All the trees and vines were looking delightful under the *candra-kirana*, the moonlight. Kṛṣṇa pointed up to the moon and said: “Anaṅga, look at the *pūrṇa-candra* (full moon)! She knew the reason why Kṛṣṇa was showing her the *pūrṇa-candra*. After marriage ceremonies, before the first night union, there is a ritual called *varsara-sajia*. The husband has to point out the full moon to the wife before their union. This ritual is known as *candra-darśan*. Anaṅga Mañjarī knew about this. Kṛṣṇa asked: “Anaṅga, have you ever seen such a beautiful full moon? Do you know the meaning of the full moon?”

Anaṅga, feeling shy, lowered her head. She could understand that Kṛṣṇa was indicating their forthcoming union. She was too embarrassed to say anything. She kept silent, her hands slowly lifting her veil to cover her face. She was blushing with embarrassment and there was a slight smile on her face. Kṛṣṇa held her chin and said: “Look at me, I want to see you, my eyes are like bumblebees. They like to drink honey, and for my eyes your face is like a thousand petalled lotus. Let my eyes drink the honey from your beautiful lotus-like face. I want to look deep into your eyes. Through your eyes, I will read all your unspoken words. Right now, in this *kuñja*, we do not need to speak. We will exchange words through our eyes. Just let me look into your eyes, Anaṅga”.

He pulled her chin up and her veil fell back, uncovering her eyes. Thus their eyes met and stayed locked in each other’s gaze for a long time. This was the first deep eye contact between them since they had first met. By this eye contact Kṛṣṇa lost consciousness just as Anaṅga Mañjarī did at his first touch. She had the same qualities as Rādhārāṇī, and by the power of her eyes she mesmerized him. They were seated on the banks of the pond in her *kuñja* holding each other’s hands, eyes locked, completely immersed in each other’s consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga Mañjarī were seated on the *ratna-vedi* on the banks of the beautiful pond, immersed in each other's eye contact. They were completely oblivious to externals and unaware that they were being watched by others. After Lalitā *sakhī* had ushered them both into the *kuñja*, Rādhārāṇī and all her *sakhīs* had quietly followed them without their knowledge. They were curious to witness this very special first meeting of Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga.

Kṛṣṇa was completely at ease. He felt free from any kind of fear after permission was granted by Rādhārāṇī and Lalitā *sakhī*. Without any hesitation he was now trying to open Anaṅga Mañjarī's heart by showing his love in various ways. He showed her the moon to arouse romantic feelings in her heart. Then he showed her the beauty of the forest with humming birds and bees, beautiful blooming flowers, and fruits from all seasons. There was a cool breeze from the Malayan mountains. Kṛṣṇa chose this spot on the banks of the pond, so that they could see the beauty of the whole *kuñja* from there. Then he picked a juicy mango and ate it with her. This was his romantic approach to make her feel comfortable and familiar with him, so that she would lose all shyness and fear. He is now very gently becoming more intimate with her. He talked to her very lovingly with sweet words.

Kṛṣṇa: "Anaṅga, I have served your elder sister and she knows how well I can serve her. I am her expert *dāsa*. Now please allow me the pleasure of serving you. To serve you, I need the help of your two closest friends, as they know all your intimate secrets. Without knowing all your likes and dislikes and what delights you the most, I cannot serve you perfectly. Now, please let me serve you.

Anaṅga was speechless. She had no idea how to reciprocate with his words. She could only remember how she served him with Rādhārāṇī. Now, she had to personally act in the role of her sister, which was something she had never thought of even in her wildest dreams. He could sense that she was feeling awkward, out of shyness. So, he started to speak sweet words of praise again to remove this obstacle.

Kṛṣṇa: "O Devī, you are so beautiful and I cannot explain how attracted I am to you. I cannot wait to serve you. I want to decorate you."

Anaṅga: "How would you like to decorate me Kṛṣṇa?"

Kṛṣṇa: "I have all the most beautiful ornaments available right here before my very eyes. The moonlight is here and so many beautiful flowers and new budding leaves that I can pick to decorate you."

kadamba campaka nīpa, gandharāja, puṣpa, baka,  
 keśara kāñcana koto āra  
 punnāga pātala keyā, gandha vahe āmodiyā  
 juthi jāti seotī apāra(48)

“There were fragrant flowers like *kadamba. campaka. nīpa gandharāja, baka, keśara kāñcana* and many others. There were also the *punnāga, pātala* and *keyā*, whose fragrance spread all around filling the whole atmosphere and judo pm flowers were also available in abundance.”

mālatī mallikā kuṇḍa, gulāla mādhavī-vṛnda,  
 tīra śobhā gandhe rahe bhari  
 nānā pakṣa kolāhola, śārī śuka kabutara  
 nṛtya kore mayūra mayūri (49)

“On the banks of the pond, there were *mālatī. mallikā, kuṇḍa. mādhavī*, and rose flowers. Many different birds, like the pigeons and the *śārī* and *śuka* parrots were singing, and the peacocks were dancing wildly.”

### Commentary:

Kṛṣṇa got the hint of approval from her eyes. He had mentioned to her earlier that they should speak more with their eyes. When their eyes met, the eye contact made them penetrate deep within each other, losing their external consciousness. Now he felt the desire to decorate her.

Kṛṣṇa: “You just sit here and watch me pick all the flowers for your decoration. I know which flowers you like most. All the flowers blooming here in your *kuñja* are your favourite ones.”

Kṛṣṇa then picked some special flowers and started making some ornaments. First he made a garland for her and seeing this she said,

Anaṅga: “O Kṛṣṇa! I want to make a garland for you too. When you offer me a garland, I would like to offer you a garland in exchange.”

Kṛṣṇa: “Okay, you need not collect the flowers; I will collect them and bring them to you.”

Kṛṣṇa collected lots of flowers and brought them to her and both of them sat and started making garlands and all the ornaments necessary for each other. He made hers and she made his; flower ornaments for the head, wrist, waist and feet. After they finished making all the ornaments, Kṛṣṇa started decorating her. He had made garlands with *kadamba, campaka, nīpa, gandharāja* and *baka*. After offering a garland to her, he said: “This

*vaijayantī mālā* with various flowers looks very beautiful on you.” Then he placed different ornaments on her one by one. After placing bangles on her wrists and anklets on her feet, he expressed his desire to decorate her hair.

Anaṅga was surprised and she asked: “Do you know hair decoration for girls Kṛṣṇa?” “Yes, Anaṅga, I was trained by your elder sister. I am now expert in this art of decorating beautiful girls. She is my guru in this art. Look, I collected this *gulal* (the powder of rose petals used during Holi festival, which young girls use as a make up for their cheeks) to decorate your beautiful moon like face. I also collected this vermilion to decorate your forehead. I had no knowledge of girls’ decorations, but your elder sister has made me an expert. So, please allow me to decorate your hair also. You will be surprised to see how good I am at it.” Then Kṛṣṇa started to weave her braid.

Kṛṣṇa was remembering all his pastimes with Rādhārāṇī and he wanted to decorate Anaṅga the same way. He placed all the *cameli* and *campaka-puṣpa* neatly in her braid. Then he collected many *campaka-karnikas*. When they are flower buds, they look like pearls, so he decorated her hair with these flower pearls. After he was done, he asked her to turn around to see how it looked. He was not satisfied and again he started fixing her braid with more flowers.

Kṛṣṇa made the garland and all the ornaments with flowers without using any thread or needle. In the end he placed newly sprouted young copper coloured leaves to decorate her hair. At last he was satisfied and he said: “Now you look more beautiful than your elder sister.”

Anaṅga said: “O Kṛṣṇa! All this time I was serving you with my sister. So many times I have offered garlands and have decorated and dressed you both. I had so much pleasure offering this service, but today, I am privileged to decorate you, as my beloved, my *prāṇanātha*.” Then Anaṅga started to decorate her beloved Kṛṣṇa.

Rādhārāṇī and all her *sakhīs* were watching from a distance. They were amazed to see this scene. Rādhārāṇī, as the elder sister, was feeling uncomfortable to watch this amorous scene of Kṛṣṇa with her younger sister. Although she felt that it was not proper etiquette to watch her younger sister like this, she could not resist it. Lalitā *sakhī* was trying to dissuade her from watching any more: “If Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga were to know that you are watching, they will lose all their amorous desires out of shyness. It will just spoil their mood, so it is best you leave, O Rādhē, and allow us to stay and watch them”, but Rādhārāṇī could not bring herself to leave. Lalitā then told Rādhārāṇī, “Watching Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga together, is just like when Kṛṣṇa is

with you. There is no difference. Anaṅga is really a non-different form of you. After she has opened her heart, we can see this. She has the same qualities as you. Look, how she is decorating Kṛṣṇa.”

Anaṅga started to decorate Kṛṣṇa starting from his lotus feet, her heart filled with love. She said: “Decorating you with these feelings, I can understand why my sister is so passionate about you. Anyone who sees your lotus feet, will fall madly in love with you. The light emanating from all your toe nails destroys all the darkness in one’s heart and pure prema appears in its place. You have such beautiful lotus feet Kṛṣṇa.” She took his lotus feet on her lap and decorated them with flower paste. If any colour is mixed with black, it won’t be noticeable, as black hides all the other colours. But it was so surprising that she could paint his feet with colour made of flower paste and it was strikingly noticeable. She also decorated both his ankles with flower-*mañjarīs* as ankle bells.

Then she proceeded to his lotus-like navel and said: “O Kṛṣṇa! Your lotus-like navel is giving me so much pleasure. So, let me decorate this part. First, let me rearrange your *pītāmbara*.” She rearranged Kṛṣṇa’s clothes nicely in a different style. She placed the *aṅga-vastra* perfectly and said: “O Kṛṣṇa, now your dress is looking perfect.” She placed another cloth on his waist as a waist band. Then she decorated his waist with flowers.

“Kṛṣṇa! I know today I will get a place on your broad chest. So, I need to decorate it very beautifully. I made this *vaijayantī mālā* just the way you like it. I have been making garlands like this for a long time. Today it is very special because it is not made from ordinary flowers like on other days. Today I have made it with my love for you, so please accept this garland, Kṛṣṇa.”

Then she looked at Kṛṣṇa’s face and asked how she could decorate it. “I decorated your body with various ornaments. But I actually decorated the ornaments with your body. The ornaments look more beautiful now than before since they are placed on your body.”

This is the amazing nature of Kṛṣṇa’s body; it is *bhūṣaṇa-bhūṣaṇāṅgam* (the ornament of all ornaments). “O Kṛṣṇa! No one can explain your beauty in words. You are an *indranīla-kanta-maṇi* (blue gem). You can never hide yourself even in darkness. Everyone is critical about your black complexion, but the surprising thing is that wherever you are, even if there is no light, your bodily effulgence will brighten up the whole place.

I have nothing to offer you except my very self at your lotus feet. How can I decorate you? Your moon-like face does not need any decoration. It is already complete in its own beauty which is actually more beautiful than

thousands of moons. Let me decorate your hair. I have always admired your *kuñcita-keśa*, curly locks. And it is not only me, everyone is attracted to these beautiful curly locks of yours. Today I have this chance to finally decorate your hair with my own hands. Please allow me.”

“O yes, Anaṅga, you can do anything you like with me. This body is now your property.”

Anaṅga started to decorate Kṛṣṇa’s long and curly hair, which was always dishevelled. He is not able to keep his locks neat and tidy, so they sometimes cover his eyes and sometimes his face. Anaṅga lovingly combed his hair with her fingers and made a top knot with the hair from the front of his face. She then decorated the top knot with the different kinds of flowers that he likes most, like *mallikā* and *yūthī*.

Then Kṛṣṇa asked: “Have you finished Anaṅga?” “Yes, Kṛṣṇa, but no one can be fully satisfied decorating you. Ever increasing ideas appear in the heart to decorate you with different ornaments and flowers. You have such beauty which increases at every moment in a new form, *nitya-nava-navāyamāna* (ever fresh). I will just do what I can within my limited capacity. But Kṛṣṇa, I am really not satisfied.”

Kṛṣṇa held her hands and slowly pulled her towards him and placed her on his lap.

haṁsa dāhukī kīra, dāḍimba vanete sthira,  
nīlakaṇṭha kapota kuhukī  
vana ati sunirmala, vṛkṣa latā suśītala,  
pūrṇa candra kiraṇe jhalaki (50)

“Swans, white-breasted-waterhens, parrots, blue-neck-pigeons and cuckoo-birds were happily enjoying themselves in the pomegranate forest with its trees and vines. The forest looked enchanting, bathed in the rays of the full moon.”

### Commentary:

Usually, at night, we do not hear the birds. Very few birds sing during the night. The owl likes to fly around in the dark, but parrots and pigeons usually do not sing during the night since they are asleep. They wake up very early in the morning and start singing. But on this special full moon night of their first union, it was like a day of celebration for all the birds. The male cuckoo birds started singing (female cuckoos do not sing). The male and female peacocks started to dance in front of them. Kṛṣṇa was holding her

with one hand and with his other hand he was pointing out the peacocks dancing to the rhythm of the birds' song. The birds are the singers, the peacocks are the dancers, and the trees and the creepers are like the audience, just as in the *rājya-sabhā* the king sits with all his ministers. Before they begin any meeting or discussions, usually there is some form of entertainment by dancers and singers. The same thing was happening here. Before the intimacy started, the birds, mainly *śuka* and *sārī*, led the singing, and the other birds gave the chorus. The peacocks danced to the rhythm of their song and the trees and creepers looked on as spectators.

Kṛṣṇa was pointing out how the male and female peacocks are dancing very intimately. Then he pointed out to the *śuka* and *sārī* parrots, who were also singing romantically, kissing each other in between the chorus. He pointed out the male and female deer, which were also intimately caressing each other. Kṛṣṇa is showing all this intimacy of the birds and animals just to arouse amorous feelings in Anaṅga's heart.

The whole environment was creating a favourable *uddīpana* (stimulants) for amorous love. Nature had perfectly arranged the right stimulants to prepare them for their sacred union.

Finally Kṛṣṇa said: "We have seen all the beauty of the forest. Anaṅga, now it is time for us to enter the private chambers of the *kuñja*."

tāra madhye hema kuñja, prabāla mukutā puñja,  
ratnāgāra ratna simhāsana  
sūkṣma vastra saṁskāra, dugdha phena śayyā yāra,  
nānā dravya śayyāra bhūṣaṇa (51)

"In the midst of this beautiful forest is a golden *kuñja* decorated with pearls and corals. Within the *kuñja* there is a beautifully decorated jewelled throne in a jewelled temple. Therein was a bed covered with a thin white sheet, as white as milk foam, and decorated with different fineries."

### Commentary:

The *sakhīs* had already prepared the private chambers within the *kuñja* for Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. It was decorated with corals and pearls, which are the favourite gem stones of both Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. It looked like a jewelled hut decorated with flowers and vines. Inside there was a *ratna-vedika*, a jewelled throne for them to sit on.

Then Kṛṣṇa again gestured to Anaṅga to enter the jewelled bower within the *kuñja*. He said, "We have seen the beauty of the forest outside and

now it is time for us to enter your sacred *kuñja*.” Anaṅga was very nervous. It was overwhelming for her to think of what was going to happen inside and she lost her balance, feeling faint. Kṛṣṇa quickly grabbed her: “O Anaṅga, are you not feeling well? Let me lift you and carry you inside.” He carried her in his arms and Anaṅga placed both her arms around his neck clinging on to him tightly.

Their eyes met again, *nayane nayana mile*. Kṛṣṇa looked down into her eyes. They tasted the honey from each other’s eyes. Eyes are like bumblebees, which like to drink honey from the lotus. Kṛṣṇa’s eyes were drinking the honey from Anaṅga’s lotus face, and Anaṅga’s eyes were drinking the honey from Kṛṣṇa’s lotus face.

Kṛṣṇa walked gracefully with very slow and gentle steps, like a *gajendra gati*, an elephant’s walk, carrying Anaṅga in his arms. They both gazed into each other’s eyes, while he walked slowly towards the inner chambers of the *kuñja*. They were both deeply mesmerised with passion, locked in each other’s gaze and feeling immense bliss even before they entered the sacred *kuñja*.

Rāmāi Thākura is now describing the *darśan*, he sees from outside the *kuñja*. He is watching everything from a distance in his *smaraṇa* and is describing to us what is happening there.

tāmbūla samputa jhāri, tāke suvāsita vāri  
ālabāṭī cāmara gaṅgājālī  
mādhavānaṅga mañjarī, dohe haste dharādhari,  
praveśila hoiyā kutūholī (52)

“There were boxes with betel leaves, jugs with scented water and spittoons, hand fans, and a container filled with Gaṅgā water (for *pūjā*). Mādhava and Anaṅga eagerly entered into this sacred chamber holding each other’s hands.”

### Commentary:

Kṛṣṇa managed to arouse Anaṅga’s emotions and desires to participate in conjugal pastimes. She was now immersed in her *kānta-bhāva*, (lover’s mood) which was hidden within her heart all along. She was now prepared to serve Kṛṣṇa as he desired in the highest mood of *kānta-bhāva*.

She usually served in the *mañjarī* mood, but now she was feeling a very special *bhāva*, which contradicted her *mañjarī-bhāva*. No *mañjarī* will ever try to take the place of Rādhārāṇī, because they know that no one can



please Kṛṣṇa like her. They are always happy to serve Kṛṣṇa through Rādhārāṇī. Previously, Kṛṣṇa had accepted Anaṅga's service through Rādhārāṇī and now again by Rādhārāṇī's desire he was accepting her service directly. As it was the first time for both of them to be together, they had to first get acquainted with one another as lovers. They were both very confused in the beginning. They needed some time to adjust to this change in their relationship.

Just as they arrived at the entrance of the sacred chamber, Kṛṣṇa gently put Anaṅga down and, holding hands, they both walked inside slowly. He was captivated by the beauty of the *kuñja* and said: "Look, Anaṅga, how beautiful this *kuñja* is! It is like a *prema-mandira*, a temple of love." Kṛṣṇa was showing her the beauty of each part of the *kuñja*: "Look how the *mañjarīs* have arranged the jewels without fixing or gluing them onto the floor." He made her sit on the jewelled throne made for their sitting and sat next to her holding her hands.

*Rādhānujā kānu saṅge, magna duhe rati raṅge.* Rādhā's younger sister is now totally engrossed in her Kānu in topmost ecstasy. They are whispering love talks to each other. Kṛṣṇa was saying that he would like to make love to her in the same way that he did with Rādhārāṇī. But Anaṅga was feeling so embarrassed that she covered Kṛṣṇa's mouth with her hand. She said, "I know how much you love me. You need not explain or express it outwardly. I can feel your love. I am confused as to how I am supposed to reciprocate with your love. I truly do not know how to serve you for your satisfaction. Therefore I surrender myself to you. Please do with me as you like."

Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa was not so happy. He did not want to enjoy a one-sided love play. He wanted full reciprocation from his beloved. Both partners have to be participating equally to enjoy love play. Like in any other play, the two parties must be active and giving their full dedication. Only then various moods, activities and sweet loving exchanges will arise. Kṛṣṇa decided to encourage Anaṅga to participate freely in their romantic play. This was the scene inside, but what was happening outside?

rādhā lalitādi yoto, dāsikā mañjarī koto,  
mandira bāhire sab thāki  
rādhānujā kānu saṅge, magna duhe rati raṅge,  
rasāveśe parama kautukī (53)

“Rādhā, Lalitā and all the maidservants stayed outside this love *kuñja* while Rādhā’s younger sister and Kṛṣṇa became absorbed in in love play in topmost ecstasy.”

### Commentary:

Outside the *kuñja*, Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* were watching everything from the small lattice windows. The *mañjarīs* are the only ones allowed to enter the *kuñja* if there is any necessity for service. They know everything that happens when Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa were playing their conjugal *līlās* in the *kuñja*. When they are together, sometimes the *sakhīs* tease Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī about what they did in the *kuñja*.

Now they were all very curious to watch what was going on inside with Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. They were whispering among themselves. Lalitā told Rādhārāṇī: “Oh Rādhā, look at how Anaṅga has opened her heart.” Then Viśākhā said: “O Rādhā, you should not be here. She is your younger sister; you should not be watching this. Go and sit at some distance; I will tell you everything in detail later.” They were watching everything and what thrilled them the most is how Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga were performing their love quarrels. They had seen Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī’s love quarrels and now they were inquisitive to see this quarrel between Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. They were also curious to see how Anaṅga would respond to Kṛṣṇa’s amorous advances.

doṇha aṅga paraśane, doṇhe bhelo agiyāne  
raṇa bola ānanda apāra  
vākovākya mṛdu hāsa, bhrū-netra suvinyāsa  
meghe yeno bijuri sañcāra (54)

“They caressed each other and experienced boundless ecstasy in their love fight. They smiled and whispered loving words to each other and made gestures with their eyes and eyebrows which looked like lightning striking into the clouds.”

### Commentary:

Both of them were in ecstasy. Just to bring her to the same level as his, he touched her amorously. Previously, Outside the *kuñja*, he touched her by holding her hands and lifting her in his arms, but now inside the *kuñja* he wanted to arouse her amorous desires even further. Anaṅga was lost in ecstasy and Kṛṣṇa whispered in her ears:

“Anaṅga, do you know the meaning of your name? It means ‘one who has no form.’ It is also the name of Cupid, Kāmadeva, and this name is perfect for you. Who chose this name for you?”

Anaṅga: “What do you mean I have no form? You were glorifying every part of my body and now you say I have no form?”

Kṛṣṇa: “You have no fixed form, Anaṅga. Every time I look at you, your form keeps changing. It is impossible for me to describe you with any fixed form. Your form can change as I want to see it. So, this name is very perfect for you. You have no fixed form or mood.”

Anaṅga: “Am I always changing my mood?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, just think about yesterday. Were you in the same mood that you have now?”

Anaṅga: “Oh Kṛṣṇa, you gave me this mood. It did not happen by my desire. You changed my mood.”

Kṛṣṇa: “No, Anaṅga! That mood was always there in your heart. I just exposed it, that’s all.”

Anaṅga: “You mean to say that I always had these feelings for you?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, Anaṅga!”

Anaṅga: “But why did this feeling not reveal itself before?”

Kṛṣṇa: “You know Anaṅga, everything is connected with time. Only when the right time comes will everything manifest accordingly. Today I touched your heart, and now it has revealed its true nature. Until now, I had no desire to reveal what was in your heart. All this while, for a long time, you and all the *mañjarīs* headed by Rūpa Mañjarī were serving me and Rādhārāṇī. Sometimes I have teased and flirted with the other *mañjarīs*, but never with you. Then suddenly a new desire arose in my heart. I wanted to find out what kind of taste was there in your heart, whether it is like a rose, lotus or a beehive full of honey. I wanted to taste the pure love in your heart. Everyone says that I have the special quality of being able to taste the honey from flowers that have not yet fully bloomed. Today, I had the desire to drink honey from your heart’s flower. When I tried to drink this honey, suddenly the flower fully blossomed. That shows that you already had this feeling. By my touch the flower bloomed to offer me its honey.”

Anaṅga: “Are you joking with me Kṛṣṇa?”

Kṛṣṇa: “No, I am not joking, Anaṅga. When I touched you, the flower opened and I saw so much love waiting for me. So, I have the right to accept this love that was kept for me. That is why, I was begging you for your two friends. It’s not like what I said before. I was lying to you. I felt,

that I have the right to this love, which was rightfully mine. That is why I begged for your two pomegranates.”

Anaṅga: “Oh Kṛṣṇa, then you were lying to me?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, it was only to get you to open your heart.”

Anaṅga: “So, you lied to me just as you flirt with all the other *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Oh no, Anaṅga! That is not the same. I am not flirting with you. I have the same love for you which I have for your elder sister.”

Anaṅga: “O Kṛṣṇa, so you are dividing your love, fifty percent for me and fifty percent for my elder sister?”

Kṛṣṇa: “No, Anaṅga, it is not like that.”

No one can defeat Kṛṣṇa with words. He is a *parihāsa-viśārada* (expert in witty repartee).

Kṛṣṇa: “I have *pūrṇakāma* for both of you. One hundred percent for you and one hundred percent for her. There is no contradiction here.”

Anaṅga: How can you offer one hundred percent to both of us? If you offer one hundred percent of your love to my sister, how can you offer the same one hundred percent to me? You would have to have two hundred percent love, half for me and half for my sister. And that is also considered fifty percent, Kṛṣṇa!”

Kṛṣṇa: “Anaṅga, please know this supreme truth. To me, both of you are one. Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga are not two separate individuals for me.”

Anaṅga: “So, your love for me is just like seeing my elder sister in me? If you are seeing both of us as the same, then right now it is either me or my elder sister in front of you?!”

Kṛṣṇa is very smart with his words and is very tricky with the *vraja-gopīs*, but sometimes he has to accept defeat, especially from Rādhārāṇī. Now, he was caught in an awkward situation. He thought for a while and then said:

“Actually, I have no words to express myself. All I can say is that, when one of you is in front of me, I see only the deity of love, and that is the only reason, why I can offer one hundred percent of my love, when I am with either one of you.”

Anaṅga: “O Kṛṣṇa, is that how you feel?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Yes, Anaṅga, that is why I called you Devī: ‘O Devī, please allow me to serve you.’”

Anaṅga, losing all her shyness, started fighting with Him. Kṛṣṇa had to say all these things to make her give up the last trace of hesitation and confusion so as to participate whole heartedly in this love game. He managed

to open her heart fully and they started to play with each other. They caressed each other and experienced boundless bliss in their passionate fight. *Raṇa bola ānanda apāra*, one may question if such words are appropriate for this *raṇa bola*, love fight? This may seem like mundane, material activity, but actually this exchange is very pure. It is transcendental and beyond anything we can possibly perceive with our material mind and senses. We should not make the mistake of comparing this divine love play with mundane sense enjoyment.

ābharaṇa kvaṇakvaṇi, kataka kaṅkana dhvani  
kiṅkinī nūpura runujhunu,  
bhuje bhuje bandhana, dṛḍha parirambhana  
pulakāṅga sveda bindu tanu (55)

“Their ornaments like the armlets, bangles, waist bells and ankle bells were jingling, while their bodies danced with their hands locked. Their body was covered with goosebumps and sweat drops.”

### Commentary:

Horripilation and goose bumps started appearing on their bodies. There was a cool breeze blowing, but they were sweating. These were all the *vikāras*, the symptoms of love’s trance. Their eyebrows started to dance. If someone were to start dancing suddenly, it would be because they had heard some nice music or some good news. Why are their eyebrows dancing here? They are delighted to be in each other’s presence. Kṛṣṇa was showering her with all his love and Anaṅga was in ecstasy. She was experiencing the same feelings and pleasure as Rādhārāṇī. Her eyebrow danced with joy. As their ecstasy increased, their ornaments, the bangles, waist bells, armlets and ankle bells, started jingling. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa was embracing Anaṅga and sometimes Anaṅga was embracing him. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa was dishevelled the flowers in her hair and Anaṅga was pulling Kṛṣṇa towards her with his garland. In this way their amorous love fight was going on.

*Bhuje bhuje bandhana, dṛḍha parirambhana*, it was like a graceful dance with their lips locked together. Their bodies were decorated with goosebumps and sweat. All the decorations that they painted on each other’s body with the flower extracts started to drip down with their sweat.

yathā mṛgāṅka cakorī cātaka jaladau yathā  
daridra ratna saṁyoga mādhavāṅga mañjarīm (56)

“The meeting of Mādhava and Anaṅga Mañjarī was as blissful as the meeting of the *cakorī* bird with the moon, the *cātaka* bird with the rain cloud, or like the poor person finding a precious jewel.” (Bhajana Candrikā)

candrete cakora yeno, jalada cātaka teno,  
ei mata dohu vyavahāra  
daridra milalo dhana, yeno nahe nivāraṇa,  
rati yuddha kautuka apāra (57)

“They had endless pleasure in their amorous fight and behaved with each other like the *cakora* bird meeting the moon, the *cātaka* bird meeting the rain cloud, or the poor man finding a treasure.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is now putting forward this question: What is happening to both of them? Why are they so agitated and fidgeting around like two restless kids? They are sometimes embracing each other very tightly and sometimes kissing each other very passionately. Both of them seem very excited in their deep love for each other. They could not remain apart from each other. They were dancing, embracing, kissing and at times just looking into each other’s eyes.

It is just like the meeting of the *cakorī* bird and the moon after a very long period of separation. During the rainy season there are times when there is no moon for many days. There are only rain clouds in the sky, so there is no chance for the *cakorī* bird to see the moon. *Cakorī* birds are very special. They survive only on the nectar that pours down from the moon rays; that is their only food. When the moon goes into the dark *pakṣa*, the dark fortnight, the *cakorī* birds remain in separation from the moon. As soon as the moon rises again, the *cakorī* birds drink the nectar of the moon rays as if they have not drunk nectar for many yugas.

The *cātaka* bird survives by drinking only rain water. When it sees dark clouds, it gets very excited because it knows it will rain. Rāmāi Ṭhākura gives another example of union after an intense period of separation: when a very poor man receives a huge amount of wealth, he will not be able to decide what to do with himself. He laughs, cries, dances or shouts in madness. He is overcome with such ecstasy that he dances like a madman.

This is the same mood that was experienced by Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. There was always this love hidden in both their hearts for each other for a very long time, since eternity. It did not happen suddenly that she and Kṛṣṇa got attracted to each other. This was not a coincidence that Rādhārāṇī

allowed it to happen. It was not something that happened all of sudden, nor was it for the reason that Kṛṣṇa was a flirtatious debauchee and she was just another one of his damsel conquests. She was also not in the category of the other rival *gopīs* of Rādhārāṇī.

Rādhārāṇī approved of their relationship, not because she was her darling younger sister. She knew of Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga's eternal relationship, their eternal love for each other and now it was time to allow them this union which was already long overdue. All this while, because of her service in the mood of a *mañjarī*, Anaṅga had to keep her *sakhī-bhāva* hidden. She was so loyal to Rādhārāṇī that she did not allow her own desire to surpass her loyalty and surrender to Rādhārāṇī.

As for Kṛṣṇa, he too kept his attraction for Anaṅga hidden. He did not want to cause any pain to Rādhārāṇī by approaching her sister who was dutifully serving her with the other *mañjarīs*. He knew that she had this other *bhāva* for him and could see that she was keeping it concealed very carefully. After a very long period of suppressed feelings, they were finally allowed to come together. They acted like the *cakorī* and *cātaka* birds and the poor man who suddenly won the lottery. After a long period of separation when they were finally reunited, this was the display of their excitement in union. They kept fidgeting around, changing their places and moving in an agitated mood.

Watching from outside the *kuñja*, Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs* could see how they were animatedly moving around like lightning striking amid new clouds. Both of them were in the heights of bliss. After a long separation they could not contain their excitement in union.

What happens to someone who has been deprived of food for a long time and suddenly is served food with four different *rasas*? There is an order to follow, when we eat food. First, we have to eat bitter, then spicy, then sour, and then the sweets will be last as dessert. If we offer food to a very hungry, starving person, he will not follow this sequence. He will only think of filling his stomach. He might just go for the sweet *khīra* first, which is supposed to be eaten last. He will not be able to maintain the proper eating order. The same thing happened here with both Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga. When the long-awaited union finally happened, they were unable to control their emotions and were fidgeting around like two little hyper-active kids, fighting with each other in their love play.

anaṅga mukhāravinda, mādharma nāyana dvandva,  
kañje bhṛṅga matta rahe yeno  
kṛṣṇa mukha sudhākara, saṅṅita cakora,  
anaṅga mañjarī netra teno (58)

“Mādhava’s bee-like eyes feasted on the honey of Anaṅga’s lotus face. Like the cakora birds quenching their thirst, Anaṅga Mañjarī’s eyes were feasting on the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s moon-like face.”

### Commentary:

They continued their love play. They stared into each other’s eyes, drinking honey from each other’s lotus faces. Kṛṣṇa’s bee-like eyes were drinking honey from the Anaṅga’s lotus-like face, and Anaṅga’s eyes were like *cakora* birds feasting on *sudha*-nectar flowing from Kṛṣṇa’s moon-like face.

Anaṅga-Mañjarī-*tattva* is not an easy *tattva* to realise. It is only by the blessings of Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī that we can realise these truths. To know about Rādhārāṇī, we need to take shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī. And to know about Anaṅga, we have to take shelter of Rādhārāṇī.

Similar thing is mentioned in Caitanya-*līlā* about Śrī Nityānanda, who is Anaṅga Mañjarī in *mādhurya-līlā*, *ati gūḍha nityānanda ei avatāre, caitanya dekhāya yāre se’ janite pāre?* (Caitanya-Bhagavat 3.3.171). Śrī Nityānanda-*tattva* is a very complicated *tattva*. Only Śrīman Mahāprabhu can reveal this knowledge about Dayāl Nītāi to us. Rādhārāṇī is present within Mahāprabhu, and if she bestows her blessings, we can realize Anaṅga-Mañjarī-*tattva*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga performed many *rasika* pastimes for the first time with each other in *mādhurya-rasa* with a special mood as lovers. Their feelings, which had been kept hidden for so long, finally surfaced. They cherished their union by tasting each other’s *adharāmṛta*, repeatedly kissing and fondling each other. Their love making play continued until they became tired.

mādhavānaṅga mañjarī, donhete pālāṅkopari,  
viśrāma koriyā dui jane  
kṣaṇeke uṭhiyā boisi, donhe mṛdu mṛdu hāsi  
duhe mukha kore nirīkṣaṇe (59)

“When Mādhava and Anaṅga became very tired, they reclined on the bed. After some time, they sat up and just looked at each other’s faces, while smiling and talking.”



### Commentary:

Anaṅga, smiling, teasingly asked: “O Kṛṣṇa, what has happened to your face?” Their bodies were decorated with marks of their love making. Anaṅga was feeling embarrassed. What will the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* say if they see all the love bite marks on her body and all the signs on Kṛṣṇa’s body? They quickly started dressing each other again. By their love fight, they had displaced all their ornaments, dresses, flowers and garlands. Everything was misplaced on their bodies. Kṛṣṇa showed his broken garland to Anaṅga. There were no flowers left on it. All the flowers were scattered on the bed. When they rolled on the flowers, the flowers pressed on the bedsheet and the colours of different flowers made the foam-like white bed sheet turn colourful. The colours on the bed sheet were the signs of their prema.

First, we have to make our heart pure-white. When this white is mixed with love through affection and deep attachment, then different colours will manifest. Different colours symbolise different moods of love. Just like jewels in different lighting, from different angles, we see different shades of colours emanating from jewels. In the same way, the different colours manifest according to the different moods of love. The colours on the white bedsheet represented all the different varieties of moods of love that manifested during their intense love play. These colours cannot be removed from the bedsheet. They are permanent. If any colour stains a white cloth, once it is dry it is not possible to remove the stain. Kṛṣṇa was pointing out the stains on the bedsheet and said to Anaṅga: “Look at the signs of our love play on the bed sheet.”

Anaṅga was in a state of bliss and self-forgetfulness when they were together. But now she was worried what the *sakhīs* would say about this. She knew that they had been watching the whole scene peeping from the lattice windows of the *kuñja*. They would always do the same when Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī were performing their conjugal pastimes. She was now feeling very embarrassed. Both of them started rearranging their clothes and decorating each other all over again.

As soon as they were dressed, the *mañjarī* friends of Anaṅga slowly started to enter the *kuñja* as it was now time to serve them. When Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga first entered the *kuñja*, everything was prepared for them. The *mañjarīs* had already made all the arrangements for them. Betel nuts, sweets, fruits, cool water and a pot of Gaṅga-jala were there for them. Why was the Gaṅga-jala there? There is one ritual which is compulsory to perform after union. The husband and wife have to perform *pūjā* to Īśvara together. But

where did the Gaṅga-jāl appear from, as there is no river Ganges in Vraja? Gaṅga Devī had appeared there in Ānanda Ambuja Kuñja to offer her service to them. Just as the different seasons, birds, fruits and flowers and the Malayan hills' cool breeze has appeared there, so Gaṅga Devī had also appeared there to serve them. It was not brought there by the *sakhīs* or *mañjarīs* as there is no river Ganges in Vraja. The Gaṅga-jala had been placed there for this ritual to be observed after their love making.

If we look at the Yogapīṭha chart, we will see that Yamunā Devī is flowing just next to Ānanda Ambuja Kuñja. Even though the water of the Yamunā is equally sacred, Gaṅga Devī desired to serve them to complete their sacred love ritual.

The maidservants started to fan them with *cāmaras* as they watched Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga cleaning each other's faces. Anaṅga was cleaning Kṛṣṇa's face with her own cloth. All the decorations were spoilt by their love making. Kṛṣṇa cleaned Anaṅga's face with his *pītāmbara* cloth, saying, "Anaṅga, I am not very happy to clean your face. You look more beautiful with all these mark than you did before. I can see my love on your face. I can see the marks of my lips on your chin, your forehead and everywhere. With all these marks you are looking extraordinarily beautiful." He reluctantly wiped the marks away. He then started to decorate her again. The *sakhīs* knew what was going to happen, so they had already kept everything there for this redecoration. Kṛṣṇa rearranged her hair and all the ornaments on her body. Even her ankle bells were scattered. Kṛṣṇa had to search for everything. One ankle-bell was on one side of the bed and the other on the other side.

After he finished decorating her, he seated himself on the ground. He told Anaṅga to place her lotus feet on his lap. She hesitated: "O Kṛṣṇa, how can I place my feet on your lap. It is not possible for me."

Kṛṣṇa said: "I have to place your ankle bell on your feet and at the same time I want to see the beauty of your lotus feet and fix my mind there." According to *rasa-śāstras*, the love encounter does not end after union. It begins with sweet, romantic, flattering words. The next stage is touching each other; then embracing each other and then tightly holding each other. In this fashion it will ascend stage by stage. Only after both of them open their hearts does this love-meeting take place. After it is completed, then it will descend to the beginning stage. It is just like climbing up to the top of a mountain and then slowly coming down again using the same process.

Kṛṣṇa is *rasika nāgara* and *rasika śekhara*. He cannot leave Anaṅga without completing the full process of love-making. When they became very tired, they lay down next to each other and admired each other's faces. They

held each other's hands and Kṛṣṇa, looking at the bruise on her chin and said: "O Anaṅga, maybe I bit too hard on your chin. Are you feeling any pain?" These kind and gentle words were to give her pleasure and comfort.

Now they were slowly coming down to end the play. Kṛṣṇa asked her to place her feet on his lap, but she refused as she could not imagine doing that. Kṛṣṇa took her feet by force and placed them on his lap. Holding them in his hands, he told her: "Your feet really are like lotuses. All the toes of your feet look like lotus petals. It is very surprising that your lotus feet look like golden lotuses, *svarna-kamala*. I have seen lotuses made of gold, but they are not soft like real lotuses and have no fragrance. But your feet are soft and golden with a sweet fragrance. Now my eyes are fixed on your lotus feet and it is not just for now. I want to serve you again and again. I feel it is my duty to serve you like I did with your elder sister, Rādhā. I know you are feeling shy, but I am telling you what is going on in my mind and heart. These effulgent lotus feet of yours destroy all the darkness in my heart. The fragrance from your feet destroys all my lusty feelings. I have no words to describe your *mādhurya*, sweetness."

Anaṅga asked Kṛṣṇa: "Is it really true that you were in love with me for a long time?"

"Yes Anaṅga! For a very long time. I do not know why I could not reveal it earlier, but today I felt so strongly attracted to you that I was unable to restrain myself from expressing it to you." Kṛṣṇa cleaned and stroked her feet. She felt more pleasure from this act of his than during the love play. As Kṛṣṇa's hands lovingly caressed her feet, she felt his pure love for her and that made tears of bliss flow from her eyes, which fell onto Kṛṣṇa's lap. He asked: "Why are you crying Anaṅga?" "I am not crying Kṛṣṇa. It is my *ānanda* and my love for you expressing itself as tears."

Rāmāi Ṭhākura was overwhelmed by this *darśan*. He is seeing something different today. Usually he sees lotuses in the water, but now he is seeing lotuses out of water. He sees one lotus, Kṛṣṇa's hands, holding the lotus feet of Anaṅga, and he sees tears streaming down from the lotuses of Anaṅga's eyes. Then another pair of lotuses, Anaṅga's hands, caresses the lotus face of Kṛṣṇa. All these lotuses are moving around in a graceful movement accomplishing their own duties. This is how Rāmāi Ṭhākura envisioned this beautiful scene of Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga's lotus-like *līlā*.

All the other *mañjarīs* are not entitled to this pastime. *Mañjarī-bhāva* is broken in this pastime of Anaṅga Mañjarī with Kṛṣṇa. In the Sanat Kumara Saṁhita, there is a verse clearly defining the *mañjarī bhāva* as *prārthitām api kṛṣṇena tato bhoga-parāṇ-mukhīm*, "Even if Kṛṣṇa approaches me

directly with amorous proposals I shall decline, because relenting would be tantamount to abandoning the selfless service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā by accepting pleasure unrelated to Hers.”

Even if Kṛṣṇa begs them for intimate pleasure, the mañjarīs will reject him without a second thought. They do not have this capacity to reciprocate with his desires.

In loving affairs, both parties must feel the same mood. Otherwise, it will not be pleasurable for either party. Both must open their hearts for each other in the same mood. None of the *mañjarīs* apart from Anaṅga can fulfil this requirement, not even Rūpa mañjarī. Anaṅga Mañjarī is exceptional, as she is not only Rādhārāṇī’s sister but she has Rādhārāṇī’s full blessings. Rādhārāṇī has empowered Anaṅga Mañjarī to play this role.

The position of Anaṅga Mañjarī is very unique. She is endowed with two qualities; one is that of a *mañjarī* and the other as a *kānta-sakhī*. She is both Īśvarī and a *bhakta* in one form, which makes her a unique *tattva*.

ratyantare rasāveśe, aṅge veśa bhūṣā khase,  
sāmbhālai vastra alaṅkāra  
sei kale nija dāsī, koroe sanmukhe āśi  
jala sevā cāmara sañcāre (60)

“Because of their absorption in their love game, their clothes and ornaments had fallen off, and now they got dressed and put their ornaments back on. At that time, her mañjarīs entered and served them by offering cool drinks and fanning them with *cāmaras*.”

### Commentary:

After decorating themselves, both of them sat on the bed looking at each other. Then Anaṅga’s *sakhīs* entered and asked: “Hey Anaṅga, will you allow us to serve you? Now you must be very tired. You need some refreshments.” They brought cool water and fruits and fanned them with *cāmaras*.

Then Anaṅga said to Kṛṣṇa, “Now I have to conclude our union by performing *īśvara-pūjā*.” Kṛṣṇa said, “If you want to do my *pūjā*, then you have to allow me to perform your *pūjā*.” “My *pūjā*?” “Yes Anaṅga, you are my Īśvarī. You are my most beloved and the object of my worship.” This is the ritual of performing *pūjā* to each other, the concluding ritual after a lovers’ union. So, Anaṅga did her *pūjā* by offering flowers, garlands and *naivedyas* (food offerings) to Kṛṣṇa. In Rāsa-līlā, this ritual was also

performed by the *gopīs*. This is like a *vratā*, a vow, such as the Kātyāyanī-vratā that the *gopīs* observed. The next day after Rāsa-līlā, the *gopīs* have to feed the *brāhmaṇas* after offering *pūjā*. They did not know which *brāhmaṇas* to offer *naivedya* to. So, they asked Kṛṣṇa whom they should offer the *brāhmaṇa-bhojana* to. Kṛṣṇa told them to offer it to Durvāsā Muni, who was living on the other side of the Yamunā river. The *gopīs* started on their way with their food offerings for him, but when they reached the banks of Yamunā, they found that there was a high tide in the river and the waves were too strong for them to cross. They started wondering how they would cross the river. Again, they asked Kṛṣṇa for advice and he told them to stand by the shore and tell Yamunā Devī that Kṛṣṇa is a *brahmacārī*. They were surprised: “Oh really! Kṛṣṇa, you are a *brahmacārī*? Just last night you satisfied three thousand crores of *gopīs*.”

Kṛṣṇa said: “Oh, don’t worry, just go ahead and say this.” So, they obeyed Kṛṣṇa; all of them went to the banks of the Yamunā and shouted: “Kṛṣṇa is a *brahmacārī*!!” Yamunā Devī stopped her waves, became calm and parted for them to cross the river. They crossed over and completed their *brāhmaṇa-bhojana* by offering Mahārṣi Durvāsā all their *naivedyas*.

To their surprise, he ate all the thousands of offerings down to the last bite all alone. They were surprised to see a small, slim *brāhmaṇa* gulping down all their offerings. They took his blessings and left, but on their way back once again they had to cross the river Yamunā. To their surprise, they saw that Yamunā Devī was again in high tide. They went to Durvāsā Muni this time to ask for a solution. Durvāsā asked them how they crossed over to this side and they said they shouted, “Kṛṣṇa is a *brahmacārī*” and the Yamunā made way for them. They asked Durvāsā, “Should we do the same thing again?” He replied, “No! That mantra will not work again.” He told them to go to Yamunā Devī and tell her, “Durvāsā is hungry”. They were astonished. How is it possible that he is hungry after consuming thousands of food offerings? But they did as Durvāsā told them, and to their surprise, Yamunā Devī again became calm and created a path for them to cross the river. Kṛṣṇa was waiting on the other side. He asked them how they crossed back, and they told him about the mantra Durvāsā Muni gave them.

They then asked him: “Oh Kṛṣṇa, why does Yamunā become calm and allow us to cross her waters after we shout out a lie?” Kṛṣṇa said: “That was not a lie!” “But Kṛṣṇa, how can you be a *brahmacārī* when we know of your amorous affairs with thousands of *gopīs*? And Durvāsā Muni ate thousands of preparations alone right in front of us.”

Kṛṣṇa then revealed the *tattva* to them: “Yes, I am a *brahmacārī*; even after satisfying all of you, I remain a *brahmacārī*!”

The meaning of *brahmacārī* is one who pervades the whole Brahmān (cosmos). So I am always a *brahmacārī*. He was revealing this fact about his *aiśvarya* aspect to the *gopīs*. As for Durvāsā Muni, Kṛṣṇa explained, “You can see from his appearance that he has a very slim figure. He never accepts anything for himself. He offers everything to his soul. Whenever he eats anything, it is his soul that is eating everything, not his body. So, in that way he actually did not eat anything. So, whatever you said to Yamunā was not a lie.” It was the perfect truth. In this way, the *gopīs* completed their Kātyāyanī-vratā after their union with Kṛṣṇa in Rāsa-līlā. This story is from the Gopāla Tapani Upaniṣad and reveals a very high *tattva*.

Then, Anaṅga performed her concluding ritual after the completion of her union with Kṛṣṇa by offering *pūjā* and *naivedya*.

mad īsvarī pada bhāvi, nāmnā śrī lalitā devī,  
tāñ kṛpāya ye hoy smaraṇa  
dṛṣā vṛndāvana dāsa, tāra pāda padma āśa  
dhūli koro mastaka bhūṣaṇa (61)

“With the blessing of Lalitā Devī, I am able to see and describe this Anaṅga Mañjarī *tattva*, so I am offering my worship to her. I beg for the blessings of Vṛndāvana (Candra) Dāsa, and I am adorning my head with His foot dust.”

Only by their blessings can we fix our mind and heart on our *bhajana-smaraṇa* to realise and feel Anaṅga Mañjarī *tattva*.]

Thus, ends the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā, named Rasa Kautuka.

## Concluding Lecture of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave

anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau  
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam  
hariḥ purāṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba sandīpitaḥ  
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah

“May Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, be forever manifest within the innermost core of your heart. He has descended in the age of Kali, out of causeless mercy, to bestow that which had not been given before, *unnatojjvala-rasa*, the most elevated, purest love for Śrīmatī Rādhikā – *manjari bhāva*.” (Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Vidagdha-Mādhava, 1.2/ Cc Ādi-līlā 1.4)

The cause of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s appearance, *anarpita-carīm*, is to give us what had never before been given by any of his other *avatārs*. In the commentary on this *śloka* it is mentioned that Svayam Bhagavān appears once in a day of Brahmā:

sahasra-yuga-paryantam  
ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ  
rātrīm yuga-sahasrāntām  
te 'ho-rātra-vido janāḥ

By human calculation, a thousand ages taken together form the duration of Brahmā’s one day. And such also is the duration of his night. (Bhagavad Gītā 8.17)

A day of Brahmā consists of eight thousand yugas. Four thousand *yugas* is equivalent to one day and another four thousand *yugas* is his night. Once in these twenty-four hours of Brahmā, *sākṣāt* Svayam Bhagavān appears. The descent of his different *avatārs* are not included here. It is only the advent of *sākṣāt* Bhagavān. Before Mahāprabhu no one gave such a rare gift and blessing to the *jīvas*. What was that special gift? Was it Harināma? No! Nāma is the *yuga-dharma*, which he had to give anyhow. In every *yuga* there is a different mantra for singing and chanting. In *kali-yuga*, the *mahā-mantra* is the *yuga-dharma*. So, he was bound to give Harināma to everyone. It is not something special, because it is given in every *yuga*. Protecting his devotees is also not a special gift. That is also his duty. The special gift he came to distribute to everyone is pure *vraja-prema*. He gave this pure prema

to everyone; *cāri bhāva-bhakti diyā nācāmu bhuvana* (I shall make the whole world dance by giving the four *rasas* of pure bhakti). He had never distributed it before in the way that he did in *kali-yuga*. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he gave his mercy specifically only to his eternal associates.

anugrahāya bhaktānām  
mānuṣaṁ deham āsthitaḥ  
bhajate tādṛśiḥ kṛīḍā  
yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet

“In order to bestow mercy upon the devotees as well as the conditioned souls, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests His humanlike form and performs such extraordinary pastimes (as the *rāsa-līlā*) that anyone who hears about them becomes exclusively devoted to Him.” (SB 10.33.36/Cc Ādi 4.34)

If Kṛṣṇa were to appear in *kali-yuga*, almost everybody would be deprived of his blessings as most of us are unqualified. So, we should not worship Kṛṣṇa directly without Nītāi and Gaura. Nītāi is the most compassionate, he will accept everyone, even the most fallen.

Rūpa Gosvāmī, the composer of this *anarpita-carīm-cirāt śloka*, did not mention specifically to whom Mahāprabhu came to give his gift. So, he implies that this gift is for everyone in general, including animals, plants and all moving and non-moving beings. Even the stones and mountains are included. There is one very nice example wherein Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu have given prema to sentient and non-sentient beings.

One day Mahāprabhu was performing kirtan, and he was in the deep ecstasy of prema. Suddenly, he started calling out the name “Narottama.” All the devotees were puzzled to hear this. They were wondering, who is it Mahāprabhu was calling? They had never heard of anyone by the name of Narottama. He was calling out: “Nara! Nara!” After the kirtan, when Mahāprabhu was resting, all the devotees came to Nityānanda Prabhu and asked him: “Why was Mahāprabhu calling out ‘Nara! Nara!’?” Nityānanda Prabhu told them, “Nara is the nickname of a personality by the name of Narottama, and he has still not appeared in this world.” When they heard this, they were very surprised and knew this person must be someone very near and dear to Mahāprabhu.

Later, Nityānanda Prabhu asked Mahāprabhu why he had called out for Narottama in front of everyone. Now everyone knows that he is a very close associate of yours and they suspect that you have a very special plan



for him. Mahāprabhu said, “Narottama will appear in the future to explain all the scriptures in a very simple manner in his own language. He will need your blessings. Without your blessings no one can explain prema, as you are the store-keeper of prema. We have to store this prema in the river Padma.” So, both of them made the river Padma the guardian and safe-keeper of prema for Narottama. They told her, “The time will come when Narottama will appear in this world and the day he comes to bathe in your waters, you have to hand-over this prema and blessings to him. Both of us will not be in this world at that time. You will be the safe-keeper of this prema until he appears before you.”

Padma Devī said, “Oh Prabhu, millions of people come to take bath in me. How will I recognise who Narottama is?” Mahāprabhu said, “It will be very easy to recognise him: *yahar sparṣa tumi adi uchalita va sei narottama prema dai dito diva*, when he enters to take bath in your waters, by his touch you will feel extreme ecstasy and prema. That person you will know to be Narottama.” Then river Padma asked, “You are giving me your prema and blessings to keep for Narottama, but what will happen to me after that? To store it for such a long time I too need your blessings. Otherwise, how will I have the power to store this?” “Do not fear Padma! Both of us are bestowing the same prema and blessings upon you as well. With this power you will have the strength to store this prema and at the same time you will be able to withstand the sins of all those who take bath in you.”

That is how the Padma river became a holy river. This place is in Bangladesh. It is called *prema-dhani*, the place where Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura got this prema and blessings from river Padma, and this is where he wrote his famous book, *Prema Bhakti Candrikā*.

This is one great example that demonstrates how Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s prema and blessings are not only for human beings. His prema and blessings are for everyone and not just his close associates. That is his special mercy upon the *kali-yuga-jīvas*. It was never distributed like this before. During the time of Kṛṣṇa, he gave this prema to his eternal associates in Vraja, but it was with some discretion.

When he appeared in Navadvīpa, it was with a special desire and mood. What was that special mood? Rūpa Gosvāmī said, *sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah*. According to Indian culture the children are named after the father, not the mother. But here, Rūpa Gosvāmī used the word *śacī-nandanah* to emphasize, that Śrī Caitanya came with a special mood of compassion for the fallen *jīvas*, which is comparable to maternal love.

All other *avatāras*, that came before Caitanya Mahāprabhu, including Kṛṣṇa, showed mercy to the devotees and *sādhakas* from a distance. A father and mother have the same love for all their children, but there is a difference in their way of expressing their love. Fathers show their love from a distance. Only when the child is clean and in a good mood will the father carry the child and play with him. When the child starts crying, then the mother has to come to pacify the child. Only the mother knows how to handle the child in this way. The mother knows when the child is hungry or sleepy. The mother's love for her child is unconditional. She sacrifices her own priorities for her child. When the child is unclean, the father will not touch the child, but the mother will clean her child with her own cloth and will not feel uncomfortable to place the child on her lap or embrace her child. That is the difference between a mother's love and a father's love.

In all his *avatāras* before his descent as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svayam Bhagavān came in the mood of a father. He loved and protected us, but all from a distance. Now in this *avatāra* as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he is showing his special mood, like a mother. Just the way a mother offers food to her child from her own plate, Mahāprabhu distributed his love to everyone. He is practicing and relishing this prema, and at the same time distributing it to everyone. All his children like us are getting the chance to relish this prema. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, he accepted bhakti and prema from everyone, but when the time came to exchange his love, he told the *vraja-gopīs*:

na pāraye 'ham niravadya-samyujāṁ  
 sva-sādhukṛtyaṁ vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ  
 yā mābhajan durjaya-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ  
 saṁvṛścyā tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā

(When the *gopīs* were overwhelmed with dissatisfaction due to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's absence from the *rāsa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa returned and told them): "My dear *gopīs*, our meeting is certainly free of all material contamination. I must admit that in many lives it would be impossible for Me to repay My debt to you because you have cut off the shackles of family life which are so difficult to break, just to search for Me. Consequently, I am unable to repay you. Therefore, please be satisfied with your saintly activities in this regard. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.32.22/Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 4.180)

In other words, Kṛṣṇa said, "I have no capacity to return the love that you have given me." This was the way Kṛṣṇa was reciprocating with his

*vrajavāsīs*. But now in *kali-yuga*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is spreading his arms wide open to embrace everyone and distribute this pure *vraja-prema* freely without discrimination. It was his *saṅkalpa*, his promise, to us. He wants everyone to receive it without any discrimination.

Jīva Gosvāmīpāda gave another example from *nyāya-śāstras*. Rain pours down without any consideration of where it is falling, whether into a big river or a small one, into a pond or on dry land, into an empty vessel or a full vessel, into a vessel made of clay or metal. Rain pours without consideration of the capacity or qualification of the place or the vessel it falls upon. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's distribution of blessings and compassion are similar to the rain in this way. Whether a person is of low caste or high class, poor or rich, pious or impious, there is no discrimination whatsoever. We just have to make ourselves a fit recipient to receive this mercy by opening our heart with intense greed for this prema. It's just like when we place an empty container outside the house; when it rains, it will get filled up automatically as the rain falls everywhere. If the 'pot' of our heart is not getting filled, that means we are placing the pot upside down. We must place it face up not face down. When we have it the right side up, the 'pot' of our heart will collect prema and Śrīman Mahāprabhu will appear there.

Just as Rūpa Gosvāmī said, *sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah*, I am praying to that Śacīnandana to manifest in all of our hearts and remain there always. He will appear there provided we make ourselves fit recipients of his mercy. Both Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu are very compassionate and very merciful.

We must have a searching mood, and a very strong, intense desire to receive their mercy. Then they will appear. They are always performing their *līlās* with everyone in Navadvīpa and Vṛndāvana. Even now they are continuing their *līlās*. *Adyāvadhi sei līlā kore gaura-rāya kono kono bhagyavan dekhigare pāi*, only those who are fortunate will be able to see these *līlās*. Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu are bound to appear to those in whose hearts there is an abundance of dedication and love.

There is a very nice story about sincerity and good fortune. In a village there was a very devoted Śiva bhakta. He was very poor and had no material possessions, but he was deeply attached and dedicated to his Prabhu, Devādi-Deva-Mahādeva. He was always chanting Śiva's name non-stop. One day just before dusk, Mahādeva and Devī Pārvatī were passing overhead in the sky. They looked down and caught sight of this devotee going on a long journey all alone. He had not eaten proper food for many days. Devī Pārvatī felt compassion for him and she asked Mahādeva: "Prabhu! He is

such a dedicated devotee of yours. Why are you neglecting him? He would spend more time in your *sādhana* if he were not so poverty stricken. Don't you have any compassion and love for him?" "Yes Devī, I have a lot of love for him, and I know he is a very sincere devotee of mine." "Then why are you not blessing this sincere *brāhmaṇa* with some wealth? You distribute everything freely to the *asuras*, who are always troubling you with so many problems and troubles."

"You know, Devī, lacks good fortune. He knows everything, yet he is not focused in his *sādhana* with a single-pointed surrender. He lets his mind wander here and there." Pārvatī Devī said: "I cannot believe he is not serious with his *sādhana*, when he has such devotion and dedication." Mahādeva told Pārvatī Devī: "Okay, watch for yourself..." Mahādeva then placed a box full of jewels on the road. The *brāhmaṇa* came down the road, as Mahādeva and Pārvatī Devī watched from above. When the *Brāhmaṇa* had almost reached the jewel-box, he suddenly thought: "I have eyesight and can go everywhere and see everything, but blind people are unable to see. I wonder how they feel being blind." He wanted to check how it would feel to be blind. So he closed his eyes and continued walking. After he had passed the jewel-box, he opened his eyes. Then Mahādeva told Pārvatī Devī: "Now, do you understand what I meant? He is lacking good fortune, and it is due to his foolishness and lack of steadiness in his *sādhana*. There was no need for him to divert his mind from his *sādhana*. For this reason, he misses out on all the mercy that I try to shower upon him. He is not fixed on his *sādhana* with undivided surrender and allows his mind to stray away to matters that do not concern him. Thus, he misses out on his fortune."

The same thing is happening with us. We foolishly close our eyes just when we are about to receive some mercy. We open our eyes only after that fortunate moment has passed. This is why we are deprived. We are not even trying to get mercy from chanting the *mahā-mantra*. We listen to so many lectures and read so many scriptures, but we don't follow the teachings and advice given by our previous *ācāryas*, like the Six Gosvāmīs, to achieve the highest stage of prema. If we truly desire this, we must be more serious and sincere in our bhajana. Then we will get the end result. We, will certainly attain *darśan* without fail.

They may appear to us in any form. If we are sincere and open our heart right side we will recognise them in whichever form they may appear in front of us. We must continue our *bhajana* very sincerely and seriously to be able to achieve our goal in this life and not wait for another lifetime.

## Questions and Answers

Q: You said we should not offer Tulasī at the lotus feet of Gurudeva, but what about offering Tulasī to guru's picture? Is that an offense?

A: We can offer *prasādi* Tulasī to guru's hand, chest or head, but not at his lotus feet. If in the picture, guru's hand is resting on his feet or below his knee, then we should not offer Tulasī to his hand. We can offer to his chest. In Kali-Santarāṇa Upanishad, it is mentioned that because of the disciple's offenses, the guru will go to hell and this is one of the reasons. Why does guru have to go to Naraka (hell)? The pictures of the guru represent him. If we offer Tulasī to his lotus feet, it means he is accepting it. The pictures of the deities and guru are *abheda*, non-different from them. We are not worshipping the picture; rather we are worshipping the guru through the picture. So, if we are offering Tulasī at his lotus feet that means he is accepting it and that is *aparādha*.

Q: Why does the guru still allow their disciples to offer Tulasī to their feet if it is an offense?

A: These are gurus, who are close associates of Śukrācārya or Śukrācārya himself. They are just here to divert the followers of Kṛṣṇa, to take them away from his lotus feet. They usually have some charisma to attract others and the innocent public get attracted and run after them, not being able to recognize whether they are genuine gurus of Kṛṣṇa or not.

Q: How to understand, if someone is bogus or not if their external activities are similar to a real guru?

A: If they are genuine gurus then they will stop their disciples from offering Tulasī at their feet; they will guide the disciples if they are doing anything wrong or against *śāstra*.

Q: You said that if we are chanting with ego, then the chanting does not have any value and we get no benefit. How can we destroy this ego?

A: It can only be destroyed by guru and Vaiṣṇava *kṛpā*. We cannot do this by our own effort.

Q: By chanting the *mahā-mantra*, will the ego not leave us?

A: We have to accept the *mahā-mantra* from guru or a pure Vaiṣṇava, as he is giving his blessings by empowering the *mahā-mantra*.

Q: When he is speaking to Anaṅga Mañjarī with praises, is it just a trickery of words or is he actually speaking the truth?

A: Actually, Kṛṣṇa is all attractive, and it is obvious that anyone in the whole of the three planetary systems who meet him, will be naturally

attracted to him. That is his *aiśvarya* quality. But when he is in front of Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī, all these *aiśvarya* qualities disappear. He has to use his talents with tricky words to convince them. One day they were playing hide and seek. Rādhārāṇī and all her *sakhīs* were searching for Kṛṣṇa. He was running around hiding himself in one *kuñja* to another *kuñja* in the forest. Suddenly, he found the *sakhīs* very close by and he quickly changed his form to look like the deity of four-armed Nārāyaṇa. The *sakhīs* entered that *kuñja* and when they saw the Nārāyaṇa deity, they just left that place ignoring him. When Rādhārāṇī asked them who was inside that *kuñja*, they told her there is only a deity of Nārāyaṇa in the *kuñja*. Rādhārāṇī was really puzzled: “How was it possible for the form of Nārāyaṇa to enter this forest?” Thinking this, she personally entered the *kuñja*. Kṛṣṇa tried his best to keep his form as Nārāyaṇa, but was unable to do so. Then automatically his form transformed back to Kṛṣṇa. It is not possible for him to keep his *aiśvarya* form in front of Rādhārāṇī. So, he has to use his tricky words to lure them.

Q: So, is Kṛṣṇa planning everything he is going to say and do, and they are falling for his plans?

A: Yes, that is the nature of Kānu, the naughty boy.

Q: Why did Anaṅga Mañjarī feel confused and not retaliate when Kṛṣṇa came to lure her with sweet and tricky words. The other *mañjarīs* would have got angry and chased him away. Why was she confused?

A: First, you must know that her position is not like the other *mañjarīs*. She was confused as Kṛṣṇa kept glorifying her continuously without giving up, even though she kept silent. Same time, she was also given instructions by Rādhārāṇī that she should please him if he desires to enjoy with her. She was wondering if it was Rādhārāṇī’s plan for her to offer this service to him. At the same time unintentionally she too was feeling conjugal love for Kṛṣṇa. When Rādhārāṇī personally came and instructed her to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, only then did she open her heart to him, till then she was confused.

Q: Will all the *mañjarīs* of Rādhārāṇī serve Anaṅga Mañjarī or only Anaṅga Mañjarī’s *sakhīs* serve her when she is with Kṛṣṇa?

A: All the *mañjarīs* who serve Rādhārāṇī will also serve Anaṅga Mañjarī when she is with Kṛṣṇa.<sup>26</sup> This *sevā* is non-different from serving Rādhārāṇī directly as this union is happening by Rādhārāṇī’s desire.

Q: You said that Anaṅga Mañjarī was experiencing the happiest moment in her life for the first time when she was with Kṛṣṇa in this mood.

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<sup>26</sup> Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā states that Anaṅga Mañjarī has her own group of *mañjarīs* different from Rādhārāṇī’s.

We always hear that the *mañjarīs* feel the same pleasure as Rādhārāṇī when they are serving Yūgala during their conjugal pastimes. So, why is it that this was the first time she is experiencing this happiness?

A: We cannot compare all other *mañjarīs*' feelings with Anaṅga Mañjarī. She has both *sakhī* and *mañjarī bhāvas*. Her *sakhī-bhāva* is equal to that of Rādhārāṇī's. This time she was experiencing Kṛṣṇa with a different mood. The mood of happiness that she was experiencing here is for the first time in *sakhī-bhāva*. She got the chance to fulfil the *sakhī-bhāva* in her, which is not present in other *mañjarīs*. This was her first experience to relish *sakhī-bhāva*.<sup>27</sup>

Q: Kṛṣṇa is very naughty and he is always flirting with other women. Is this relationship with Anaṅga also the same?

A: With other *gopīs* it is just a play, a pastime; he does not do that from his heart, not like this. This was a deep feeling from his heart, similar to what he felt for Rādhārāṇī.

Q: When Anaṅga Mañjarī is with Kṛṣṇa, what do the *mañjarīs* do?

A: They do the service of preparing her *kuñja* and various other *yūgala-sevā* that they usually perform when Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī.

Q: Where is Rādhārāṇī at this time?

A: She is also with all her *sakhīs* watching from a distance. When they enter the private sacred *kuñja*, Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs* will surround the *kuñja* and secretly watch the divine amorous play from the lattice windows, just like they do when Rādhārāṇī is with Kṛṣṇa.

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<sup>27</sup> The speaker seems to use the term *sakhī-bhāva* to mean *nāyikā-bhāva* or *kānta-bhāva*. This is confusing because in both BRS and UN the term *sakhī-bhāva* means *tat-tad bhavecchāmayī* while *nāyikā-bhāva* means *sambhogeccchāmayī*.





### 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave – Yūtha Vivaraṇa (Description of the Groups of Sakhīs)

Rāmāi Ṭhākura continues the third wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā by first taking shelter of Śrī Nitāicāṇḍ, Vasudha Mātā and Jāhnava Mātā. He is showing us by example how we should approach transcendental confidential topics. Our attitude must be that of a humble approach, begging for their mercy. It is impossible to realize these discussions without their blessings.

There are four stages in *bhajana*, known as *bhajana-castus path*: *nāma*, *rūpa*, *guṇa* and *līlā*. First and foremost, we have to take shelter of Harināma. *niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana*, “If one chants the holy name without offences he can easily get the treasure of prema (CC Antya 4.71). To perform *bhajana*, we have to first establish pure prema in our heart by chanting *niraparādha nāma* in a humble mood. Without chanting the holy names free from all offences no one can realize divine pastimes.

Without begging with great earnestness and sincere greed, divine grace will not appear to shower mercy on us. Until the time we do not desperately cry out for help like a man drowning in a river, no one will appear to save us. When we start crying for help, someone will jump into the river and pull us by the hair and drag us to the shore. When we beg for mercy, through divine arrangement some help will come.

Jīva Gosvāmī has given a very nice word as an example, ‘*jvalita kesira*’ which means ‘hair on fire.’ When this happens, automatically we will call out for God frantically and take his shelter in full self-surrender. Anyone can take shelter informally, but to do it with a fully surrendered mind and heart is very rare. When we surrender with sincerity, *ruci* for Harināma will develop and then through the chanting of Harināma our heart will slowly awaken and become attached to Vṛndāvana. Once our heart is infused with *vraja-bhāva* the result of chanting *niraparādha-nāma* will manifest in our hearts.

At every moment we commit countless offenses physically and mentally. Knowingly and unknowingly we are committing sinful activities. Only when all offenses and sinful nature disappear from our heart is darśan of the Lord possible. When we start tasting the drops of honey from the *mahā-mantra* one after another līlās will start appearing in our heart.

It is very important to begin our practise in this manner: otherwise we will not be successful. The Six Gosvāmīs taught us by their own example. They too followed this process. In the beginning they took shelter of Harināma and then with the blessings of Harināma they were able to write the scriptures describing all the *tattvas* and pastimes about the Lord. Transcendental knowledge and visions can only appear through blessings. It is impossible simply through our own efforts.

Before the beginning of every chapter, Rāmāi Ṭhākura is prostrating first before Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, then Vasudhā and Jāhnava Mātā. Before venturing to write about the topmost confidential transcendental truth of the pastimes of Anaṅga Mañjarī he first takes their permission and blessings.

We hear about Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and the *aṣṭa-sahkīs* from many scriptures. But knowledge about the *mañjarīs* is very confidential and rare. We do not find it in many scriptures. Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are the leaders of all the *mañjarīs* but Anaṅga Mañjarī's position is unique and her truths are even more confidential than Rūpa Mañjarī's. Her character and mood are similar to Rādhārāṇī and at the same time completely different. We can say it is the *acintya-beda-abeda-tattva* of Rādhārāṇī. Anaṅga Mañjarī is the feminine aspect of Saṅkarṣaṇa so she is different and at the same time inconceivably non-different from Rādhārāṇī. Without taking shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī's lotus feet her *līlā* will not manifest in our heart.

We have to listen to all the explanations that Rāmāi Ṭhākura has presented here with our heart, not just our ears. Only then can we feel and realize this deep *tattva*. We will now hear how Rāmāi Ṭhākura presents his prayer:

jaya jaya mahāprahhu, dayā nā chāḍibe kabhu,  
kṛpā koro śrī śacīnandana  
jaya jaya nityānanda, ghucāho manera dhanda  
śuno padmāvatī prāṇadhana (1)

“All glories to Śrīman Mahāprabhu ! Please, O Sacinandana, do not ever withdraw your mercy from me. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda! O life and soul of Padmāvatī, please remove all the misery from my mind.”

### Commentary:

“All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ! Hey Sacinandana! Please keep showering your blessings upon me.” Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura in his prayer is representing the *sādhakas*. We always fail to remember that we are hopeless without their mercy and yet we forget to be grateful. This is the

surprising nature of the relationship between Bhagavān and the *sādhaka*. Bhagavān keeps overlooking all our offences and we fail to recall all the blessings he keeps showering upon us again and again. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is pleading with him to never withdraw his mercy.

“Hey Nitāi! You are the most compassionate Lord for all the *sādhakas*! Only by your grace can I confidently take shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Without your mercy no one can realize even a single drop about Gaura-prema. When you destroy all the darkness of ignorance from my life then light will shine on my path removing all obstacles. Only then will my long forgotten eternal relationship with the Lord will once again be established. Kindly remove all miseries from my mind!”

When we are practicing our *sādhana* we should be like puppets controlled by Rādhārāṇī. Right now we are like dancing puppets of Kali Mahārāja, Māyā Devī and Śukrācārya. We have to free ourselves from their trap and place ourselves at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. This is possible only with the blessings of Lalitā Devī and Nitāicānd.

śrī vasu jāhnavā prāṇa, koro prabhu paritrāṇa  
nā chāḍiya nityānanda rāya  
mo heno patita jane, ke uddhāre tomā vine  
heno dekhi nā āche kothāya (2)

“O Nitāi! O life and soul of Śrī Vasudhā and Śrī Jāhnavā please save n\’e front this material conditioning. I see myself drowning in this material ocean of existence Please free this fallen soul from this bondage Who is there other than you who can do this?”

### Commentary:

As much as we try we are still not able to release ourselves from material entanglement. Why is it impossible to free ourselves? In Śrī Īśopaniṣad there is a very nice prayer:

hiraṇmayena pātreṇa  
satyasyāpihitam mukham  
tat tvam pūṣann apāvṛṇu  
satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye

“O Lord, You are the sustainer and nourisher of everything, both material and spiritual, and everything flourishes by Your mercy. Your devotional

service, or bhakti-yoga, is the actual principle of religion, *sanātana-dharma*, and I am engaged in that service. So kindly protect me and remove the effulgent veil of Your *brahma-jyoti* rays so that I can see Your form of eternal bliss and knowledge.” (Śrī Īśopaniṣad 15)

The great sages are praying to Bhagavān Hiranyagarbha: “Hey Prabhu! We want to know your *tattva*, your truths, to re-establish our connection with you. We try very hard but every time we are almost close to you so many glittering obstacles stand in our way to distract our attention. After many attempts to come back to you failed, we finally realized that it is you who are covering your own truth with these glittering objects. No one can overcome or cross these coverings of yours with their own effort. Only you can remove the covering and exhibit your true self to the pure devotees. In the Bhagavad-Gītā you said, *mama māyā duratyaya*, that no one can free themselves from your *māyā*, your external energy, without taking shelter of you. So please give us the shelter of your lotus feet by withdrawing the curtain of *māyā* and allowing us *darśan* of your ultimate truth, *satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye*.

Rāmāi Thākura is praying to Nityānanda on our behalf to bestow blessings upon us to make us realize the vital truths about Anaṅga Mañjarī *tattva*. We have to keep our mind alert to the fact that she is not just like any other *mañjarī*. Please let us focus on the lotus feet of Anaṅga Mañjarī, bearing this fact in mind.

In the second wave we heard how Anaṅga Mañjarī met Kṛṣṇa outside her *nikuñja-kutīra* and how she pleased him by the desire of Rādhārāṇī. Sometimes to satisfy Kṛṣṇa with a different pleasure in love play, Rādhārāṇī places Anaṅga Mañjarī in her position to do this. Now Rāmāi Thākura continues to describe in the this third wave what happened after their union.

tabe dohe sthira hoilā, aṅge veśa bhūṣā koilā,  
pūrvavat yemata āchilā  
rādhānujā sundarī, nija dāsī saṅge kori,  
mandira hoite bāhirilā(3)

“When Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga finally calmed down, they dressed and ornamented each other again. Rādhā’s beautiful younger sister then walked out of the inner chambers along with her maidservants.”

### Commentary:

After their intimate pastimes came to an end, both of them were extremely pleased with each other as they reclined on the bed and the *kin̄karīs* served them. Before long the *kin̄karīs* reminded Anaṅga that it was time to leave the *kuñja* as all the *sakhīs* were waiting outside with her elder sister. The moment she heard ‘elder sister’ she immediately jumped out of the bed.

The decorations on both of them were all dishevelled. Before she met Kṛṣṇa her *sakhīs* had decorated her very beautifully but now after their meeting everything was a mess. The *kin̄karīs* were going to help her rearrange her clothes and decorations but Kṛṣṇa said, “No, let me do it,” and he took over. Anaṅga Mañjarī had still not gotten over her shyness. She was recalling the whole meeting and the way it had all happened. She was still embarrassed and when Kṛṣṇa held her hands she closed her eyes. Kṛṣṇa said, “Look at me, Anaṅga!” You are looking very beautiful now will all the signs of our union that makes you look more attractive.” He was pointing out the signs of his nails on her body, his bite marks on her cheeks and the stains of pan on different parts of her body. Then he pointed out marks on his body like her lipstick on his face and her bite marks all over his body. He said, “There is no need to wipe away these marks. The *sakhīs* will admire your beauty if they see all these love marks.” Feeling shy, Anaṅga tried to cover her body with her clothes. It was not possible to hide all the marks. To tease her further, Kṛṣṇa tried to pull her clothes away from her. The *kin̄karīs* reminded him that all the *sakhīs* were waiting outside. They said, “If you delay any further they will forcefully enter and catch you both in this condition.”

Kṛṣṇa quickly started to adorn Anaṅga. First he started dressing her. Anaṅga pleaded with him to cover all the marks on her body. Otherwise Lalitā Sakhī, who is very sharp with her remarks, would start teasing her in front of everyone. Kṛṣṇa said, “Anaṅga, it is not possible for me to cover all the marks unless I cover your whole body with clothes.” He applied all his expertise in the skill of female make-up to adorn her. He decked her forehead with *kusuma-rāga*, a yellowish powder made from flowers. He beautifully arranged flowers in her hair and he told her *kin̄karīs*, “Now she is ready. You can take her out.” Anaṅga asked him, “Will you not come out with me?” Kṛṣṇa said, “No, no! I will not come out now. You go first and I will come later.” Kṛṣṇa was now feeling nervous. Although he knew that Anaṅga had only agreed to meet him after Rādhārāṇī and Lalitā Sakhī had granted their permission, he feared that Rādhārāṇī may have changed her mind out of jealousy. He wanted to prepare himself with a very good excuse to face

Rādhārāṇī if she were to confront him about his affair with her sister. Finally Anaṅga's *kiṅkarīs* took her out to where the other *sakhīs* were waiting.

rasa-bhare ākulita, āsi hoilā upanīta,  
śrī rādhā lalitā ādi yathā  
rati cihna sarva gāya, vastra āropiyā tāya,  
boise dhanī hoīyā mauna-vratā(4)

“Filled with excitement, Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā and others then came there. Adorable Anaṅga sat down speechless, trying her best to cover her body that was fully covered with love marks.”

### Commentary:

Anaṅga came out of her *nikuñja-kutīra* with her *kiṅkarīs*. Rādhārāṇī and her *sakhīs* were waiting at a little distance from the kuñja behind the trees. When they saw Anaṅga coming alone without Kṛṣṇa, the *sakhīs* came out from behind the trees and walked towards her. From a distance they could see all the signs on her body and they started cracking jokes. “Oh Anaṅga, you look very beautiful.” Lalitā said, “We can see Kṛṣṇa all over your body.” Hearing this, Anaṅga blushed with shyness and started covering her body.

All of Rādhārāṇī's *sakhīs* are *mukharas* (outspoken). It is their nature to tease sarcastically. Lalitā Sakhī is the leader of all these *mukharas*. She is well known for her sharp tongue. She doesn't even spare Kṛṣṇa. Everyone started joking with Anaṅga, increasing her embarrassment by saying, “Oh look at Kṛṣṇa's sign on her cheek. He has embraced her so tightly that he has bruised her arms.” They started pointing out the signs on different parts of her body. Anaṅga remained speechless and sat with her head lowered feeling embarrassed.

Everything was like a dream for her. Internally she was still immersed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, his mesmerizing touch, his sweet voice and the taste of his *adharāmṛta* had still not left her. She was totally oblivious to her surroundings and still immersed in that consciousness. She could not bring herself to utter a single word.

The *sakhīs* then said, “O Anaṅga, you must be very tired. Come and sit here. Your sister is nearby. She will be coming soon.” Then they called for Rādhārāṇī and pointed at Anaṅga saying, “Look, Rādhā! She is not sharing her experiences with Kṛṣṇa. Maybe she will tell you.” Rādhārāṇī was also waiting anxiously to hear what happened but it was not proper etiquette for the elder sister to ask her younger sister about her intimate pastimes. She

was pushing her *sakhīs* to ask her. Lalitā and Viśākhā were trying to persuade Rādhārāṇī to ask, but she said, “Anaṅga will not say anything in front of me so it is better if I go away from here so that she may say something.” The *sakhīs* said, “No, no, Rādhē! You are always sharing details of your meeting with Kṛṣṇa so Anaṅga should do the same.”

In the first wave of this book, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explained that “Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Balarāma *aikya vastu... tina nāma*” (1<sup>st</sup> Wave, 18<sup>th</sup> śloka). Although they are three different forms, simultaneously they are one. Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa is Balarāma. They are three different names and forms but one truth, one in *tattva*. Rādhā is also Anaṅga and she is also Kṛṣṇa. Balarāma is Kṛṣṇa and at the same time he is also Anaṅga Mañjarī. They are in different forms and bear different names only for the sake of expanding the *līlā*, pastimes. They are *tādātmya-svarūpa*, one by truth.

Looking at her sister, Rādhārāṇī suddenly felt herself within Anaṅga. They are non-different from each other. At the same time she was feeling Kṛṣṇa in Anaṅga. How is this happening?

Rūpa Gosvāmī explains in Ujjvala Nīlamanī,

kañcid viśeṣam āyantyā sambhogecchā yayābhitaḥ  
ratyā tādātmyam āpannā sā samartheti bhāṇyate

“That *rati*, attaining a special nature, in which the desire for enjoyment becomes one with it, is called *samarthā-rati* (the exclusive desire to give pleasure to the beloved, which therefore subjugates the beloved).” UN 14.52

This special mood of *samarthā-rati* is very rare. It is free from any interest in self-satisfaction (i.e., free from *kāma*, the desire to gratify one’s own senses). It is only available in Vṛndāvana with Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, Balarāma and Anaṅga Mañjarī. All four of them are only interested in pleasing each other. They have no desire to seek pleasure for themselves. When Kṛṣṇa meets Rādhārāṇī, he is not seeking pleasure from her. He only tries to give her pleasure. Similarly, Rādhārāṇī is not seeking pleasure from Kṛṣṇa. Her mood is only to satisfy him. When they are engrossed in trying to please each other their minds become one.

How does this oneness occur? Do they remain different in their oneness? Rūpa Gosvāmī says, *ratyā tādātmyam āpannā sā samartheti bhāṇyate*. He has given a very nice example for *tādātmyata* through Nyāya *ayagola ka nyāya*. If we place an iron rod in fire, after sometime the iron rod

anāṅga mañjarī dekhi, sabe hoilā harṣa-mukhī,  
 āiso āiso kori ādarilā  
 īṣad dhāsyā mukhe gaurī, rādhikā vadana heri,  
 vāma pārśve āsane bosilā (5)

### Commentary:

While the *sakhīs* were teasing and joking with her, Anāṅga was more concerned about her elder sister. She glanced at Rādhārānī who was seated



beside her. Rādhārāṇī then looked affectionately into her little sister's eyes and asked gently, "Anaṅga, how was your meeting with Kṛṣṇa? Are you happy? Were you successful in pleasing Kṛṣṇa?" They both looked at each other with smiling faces. Since they are very intimate they are able to communicate with each other just by eye contact. It is like when two people are in love. They need not have a verbal conversation, they can communicate with their eyes.

While all the *sakhīs* were busy passing teasing remarks, a heart to heart conversation was going on between the two sisters through their eyes. Rādhārāṇī asked again, "So how did you enjoy yourself? Were you able to please Kṛṣṇa?" Anaṅga finally spoke, "I do not know, Rādhe! You have to ask him about that." Rādhārāṇī said, "But you spent a long time inside the *kuñja* with him." Surprised, Anaṅga replied, "No Rādhe, it was not a long time. As soon as my heart opened up for Kṛṣṇa, in just a blink of an eye it all ended and I was hankering for more."

Meeting in love passes with the speed of lightning. This is the nature of prema, *yugāyitam nimeṣeṇa*. During the fire of separation, one moment is like many *yugas*. During the moment of union many *yugas* are like one moment.

lalitā kautuka mukhī, anaṅga mañjarī dekhi,  
kohe kichu sarasa vacane  
rasika nāgara saṅge, koto sukhe chilā raṅge,  
kohō dhani śuni e śravṇe (6)

"With an amused expression on her face, Lalitā started teasing Anaṅga Mañjarī. 'How much pleasure did you derive with *rasika nāgara*? Oh fortunate one please tell us. We are very eager to hear.'"

### Commentary:

Lalitā then started her witty jokes, "O Anaṅga! Just by looking at you we can imagine how much you enjoyed with *rasika nāgara*. We have heard many times from Rādhe about her experiences with Kṛṣṇa. We can imagine what took place there but we are still eager to hear from you. What did Kṛṣṇa do to you? Did he embrace you with kisses? Kṛṣṇa is always performing some new tricks with his beloved. He must have done something different with your sister too. Am I not right, Rādhe?" Rādhārāṇī tried to stop Lalitā Sakhī, "Hey Lalite! What are you doing? You are not supposed to ask her such questions directly." Lalitā countered, "Rādhe! If we do not ask her, we will never know the new actions of Kṛṣṇa in his love play. We

are all curious to know.” All the other *sakhīs* joined Lalitā in trying to coax Anaṅga into saying something.

dhanī aṅga sulalita, vimoriṣa manobhita,  
ṭhāre ṭhāre uṭhūya kautuka  
rādhik bolena dhanī, śuno rasa vinodinī,  
keno tumi hao natamukha (7)

“Feeling embarrassed and shy, she made different gestures with her lovely limbs and laughed nervously as everyone teased her. Rādhikā then said, “O *rasa vinodhinī*! Why are you keeping your head lowered in shyness?”

### Commentary:

When the *sakhīs* were adamant in their request, Rādhārāṇī tried with her affectionate words to persuade Anaṅga. She said, “O Anaṅga! Why are you lowering your head in shyness? If they want to hear, then you should relay all your experiences to them. If you feel embarrassed to speak in front of me, I shall leave. There is no need to feel shy in front of me. I know everything that Kṛṣṇa can possibly do with you. Let go of your shyness and speak, *rasa vinodinī*.”

This name *rasa vinodinī*, is one of Rādhārāṇī’s eminent names. It means one who knows the art of love play. She is an expert pleaser and at the same time knows how to derive pleasure from her lover. Now, Rādhārāṇī is addressing her sister with her own name. “Just by looking at the signs on your body we can understand how pleased Kṛṣṇa was with you. You really are *rasa vinodinī*, full of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. The love marks adorning your limbs are proof that you have pleased Kṛṣṇa with your highest prema and he has reciprocated equally. Please pacify our curiosity, Anaṅga!” Anaṅga was in a dilemma. Her sister was her guru in lessons of love but still she did not feel comfortable to relate her experiences in front of her elder sister. What did she do next?

Anaṅga was still in a trance after her conjugal *līlā* with Kṛṣṇa. It was like a dream for her. She could not bring herself to utter a word despite of all the *sakhīs* repeatedly trying to coax her into relating her amorous pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. The *sakhīs* were persuading Rādhārāṇī to make Anaṅga share her experiences with them. While all of this was going on with Anaṅga and the *sakhīs*, Kṛṣṇa was still hiding inside the sacred *kuṇḍja*. He was not sure what excuse to give to Rādhārāṇī if she were to confront him. He was a little confused and was in doubt. He did not know that Rādhārāṇī herself had pre-

planned this whole episode. She had willingly instructed Anaṅga to satisfy Kṛṣṇa as his beloved. She wanted him to experience a new taste of love making.

The question is why did she choose Anaṅga Mañjarī? Is it only because she is her own sister and she looks like him? Or is it because she is the leader of all the *mañjarīs*? No, it is not only for these reasons. She has a very special character. She has the capacity to engage in two different extremely contradictory services: as Balarāma in a male form and at the same time in a female form as Anaṅga Mañjarī. The former is very respectful to Kṛṣṇa and the latter is very loving to Kṛṣṇa.

The mood of a *lampata-nāyaka* (debauchee) is very unique. If someone is in the mood of a *lampata-nāyaka*, even if his lover is the most beautiful, possesses the best qualities and character, and knows how to satisfy him in every possible way, it is the nature of a *lampata-nāyaka* to search for another girl. Most of the time this kind of behaviour is predominant in Kṛṣṇa's character. For this reason he makes empty promises to Rādhārāṇī. He requests her to make all arrangements for their meeting and then does not turn up as promised. He goes off with Candrāvalī or with Citra or with some other damsels. When he leaves his house at night, he faithfully proceeds to the *kuñja* of Rādhārāṇī. On the way, if some other damsel tries to stop and lure him into her *kuñja*, he will say, "No! No! Rādhē is waiting for me," but they keep persuading him to just come in for a few moments. As soon as he enters their *kuñja*, his character and mood changes from the mood of a *dhira-lalitā-nāyaka*, who is very surrendered and faithful to his beloved, into that of a *lampata-nāyaka*. The special quality of a *lampata-nāyaka* is in telling lies to their beloved. They know how to use tricky and cunning words. When her *kiṅkarīs* told Anaṅga that it is time to leave the *kuñja* since Rādhārāṇī and all the *sakhīs* were waiting outside, Kṛṣṇa was feeling guilty ridden and decided to stay back in the *kuñja*. He needed time to frame up an excuse to give Rādhārāṇī. In the meantime, all the *sakhīs*, including Rādhārāṇī, were trying to wheedle Anaṅga into sharing the details of her amorous love games with Kṛṣṇa.

eteko boliyā rāi, anaṅga mañjarī cāi,  
cibuka paraśi nija kare  
boli hāri yāi āmi, nāgara toṣilā tumi,  
ithe boḍo sukha dilā more (8)

“Saying this, Rāi affectionately touched Anaṅga’s chin gently and said, ‘All glories to you for satisfying my Nāgara, you have made me extremely happy by doing so!’”

### Commentary:

Rādhārāṇī tried to remove Anaṅga’s shyness by chatting with her in the mood of a very intimate friend. Gently caressing her hair, Rādhā said, “O Anaṅga, just by looking at you, I can realize how well you have satisfied my *nāgara*. You have made me extremely pleased with your service. We can see the *adhara-rāga* on your chin, and we can understand how nicely he kissed you by the sign of his love bite showing his teeth marks on your skin.” Rādhārāṇī was trying to pacify Anaṅga’s mind, to bring her out of her shyness, and at the same time she was feeling the presence of Kṛṣṇa within Anaṅga and simultaneously feeling the same pleasure as Anaṅga. She was meditating on herself in the *kuñja* in place of Anaṅga and seeing the same thing happening to her with Kṛṣṇa. At this point, she was totally absorbed in this consciousness of experiencing Anaṅga’s *bhāva* within her own heart. She was not seeing Anaṅga as separate from her own existence. She kept asking Anaṅga, “How did Kṛṣṇa embrace you? I know how he performs his love play. First, he will approach you in a very gentle manner and after that gradually he will get more and more aggressive. When he tries to embrace me tightly, I try to free myself from him, but once caught in his embrace it is not possible for anyone to free themselves. The touch of Kṛṣṇa is hypnotising. I begin to feel spellbound and get carried off, far away to another dimension, away from the *kuñja*, losing my external consciousness of this world. Did you feel the same way when Kṛṣṇa embraced you, Anaṅga?” Rādhārāṇī was enjoying the loving touch of Kṛṣṇa through Anaṅga.

These feelings can be experienced simultaneously by all four of them: Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, Balarāma and Anaṅga. They are one in four different identities. Balarāma can also experience these feelings from a distance. He experiences all his activities in his female form as Anaṅga Mañjarī, as they are non-different male and female aspects.

Kṛṣṇa cannot perform any pastime without Balarāma, so Balarāma takes the female form of Anaṅga Mañjarī to help Kṛṣṇa relish his conjugal pastimes. Kṛṣṇa always needs Saṅkarṣaṇa next to him in all his incarnations to fulfil all his desires and duties.

In Gaura *līlā* before meeting with Nītaicāṇḍ, Mahāprabhu used to perform his kīrtan behind closed doors with only his very close associates,

and not openly with everyone. Nitāicāṇḍ met him for the first time in the house of Nandana Ācārya. When Nityānanda was invited to Śrīvāsa-aṅgam, he was disappointed to see that his brother was performing kīrtan only with his close associates. Mahāprabhu had descended with the promise to deliver the most fallen and spread his pure prema everywhere and to everyone, but in Śrīvāsa-aṅgam only selected people were allowed to enter. Nitāicāṇḍ then reminded his brother of the purpose of his advent in this *kali-yuga*.

Mahāprabhu said, “O Śrīpāda! What you say is true. I was waiting for you to come to accomplish my mission. I promised to spread *vraja-prema* to everyone, not only to the human beings, but all moving and non-moving entities. Yet it is your duty, Śrīpāda to fulfil my promise. Without you it is impossible to distribute pure prema. You are the store keeper of prema; it is your property and not mine. It is my order, that you distribute it to everyone.” Without Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa cannot perform any pastime.

In the conjugal pastimes in Vraja, Saṅkarṣaṇa as the older brother is restrained from entering the *kuñja* when his younger brother is in a private meeting with his beloved. For this reason he took the female form of Anaṅga Mañjarī to serve there. Anaṅga Mañjarī has a very unique mood and form. For the same reason, she cannot be included in the category of all the other *mañjarīs*.

In the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta it is mentioned that Rādhārāṇī does sometimes engage other *sakhīs* to perform intimate pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. The *sakhīs* have their own relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and they please him with their own mood. In the case of Anaṅga Mañjarī it is a totally different situation. She can take the position of Rādhārāṇī to give the highest pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. No one else can replace Rādhārāṇī. Only by *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva* can one give supreme pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. This *mahābhāva* has the power to take full control of Kṛṣṇa. Only Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī can do this, because Anaṅga is a non-different form of Rādhārāṇī. She has both *sakhī-bhāva*, conjugal mood, and *mañjarī-bhāva*, the mood of a beloved *kiṅkarī* of Rādhārāṇī. She has single-minded surrender to Rādhārāṇī and is always in *anugatya* to her. She has no separate desire for Kṛṣṇa.

We should not be mistaken that the *mañjarīs* have no love for Kṛṣṇa. They have love, but not independent of Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī arranged this meeting of Anaṅga with Kṛṣṇa without his knowledge. Anaṅga performed all her activities in accordance with Rādhārāṇī’s desire. While she was alone with Kṛṣṇa in the *kuñja*, she forgot her *kiṅkarī* mood. When she finally came out of the *kuñja* and had to face the *sakhīs* and Rādhārāṇī, she was again overcome with her *kiṅkarī-bhāva*. Once again, she was overwhelmed with

shyness although within, she was still in a dream state, absorbed in the bliss of Kṛṣṇa's sweetness.

In Rāsa-rajanī all the gopīs were dancing one to one with Kṛṣṇa simultaneously. Kṛṣṇa expanded himself beside all the millions of *gopīs* present there. Suddenly, they were infatuated with pride and each *gopī* thought she was the best in the whole universe and that is why Kṛṣṇa had chosen her. When Kṛṣṇa felt this ego in their heart, he left them. They were in a dream-like state, so absorbed in bliss that they did not realize Kṛṣṇa had left them. Kṛṣṇa had left, taking Rādhārāṇī along, but all the *gopīs* still continued their dancing in a trance, not realising his absence. After a long time, they realized he was no longer with them. This is the power of *mādhurya*, his beauty.

Anaṅga was also in that type of dream-like trance. But once she came into Rādhārāṇī's presence, she again felt her *kinkarī-bhāva*. Overwhelmed by shyness, she was trying to cover her body to hide all the signs of lipstick, nails, teeth, etc. Kṛṣṇa had tried to rearrange everything, but still everything was messed up, and all the signs were still visible.

Rādhārāṇī teased her about the bites on her lips. She told her, "I know Kṛṣṇa has the nature of a honey bee. Your lips are very attractive, like a lotus, so it is obvious that he bit you there." Rādhārāṇī's words are a little tricky here. She is praising Anaṅga and Kṛṣṇa, and at the same time she was feeling some separation. She is displaying the jealousy of feminine nature. She finds it difficult to accept the fact that her beloved had enjoyed with another. She had mixed feelings. One side of her was happy and delighted from feeling all that Anaṅga was feeling, but a small part of her was burning with separation. With the use of the word 'honey bee' she was subtly trying to indicate Kṛṣṇa's nature of a honey bee, which constantly moves from one flower to another flower. He will not be satisfied with one flower. Rādhārāṇī was trying indirectly to caution her sister: "If he had a chaste character, he would not have accepted you even if I had sent you there."

"Anaṅga, I know how his biting feels; it is like the bite of a honey bee. Kṛṣṇa must have mistaken your lips for a beautiful lotus, so he tried to take the honey from them. I can feel Kṛṣṇa just by looking at you. Where is he Anaṅga? He just left you after such an intense moment? It is a very important for lovers to spend time with each other after such intimacy."

Anaṅga Mañjarī came out, because she was ushered out of her *kuñja* by her *kinkarīs*. Both she and Kṛṣṇa did not want to part with each other. Where is Kṛṣṇa? Has that bumblebee flown to another flower?

Kṛṣṇa waited inside the *kuñja*, embarrassed to face Rādhārāṇī. He was thinking of a solution to pacify Rādhārāṇī in case she was upset out of jealousy. He knew the nature of women. He was not sure if the go-ahead granted was just a trick. He would find out when he sees their expressions upon coming out of the *kuñja*.

kiñcit vilamba kor, mahā naṭarāja hari,  
śyāma kānti rasete jhāmore  
campaka kalikā saṅga, rasāveśe lubdha bhṅga,  
kuñja hoite āilā bāhire (9)

“After a short while, Kṛṣṇa came out of the *kuñja* in the form of ‘Mahā Naṭarāja Hari,’ the great king of dancers. His glowing deep blue effulgence covered the whole *kuñja*. His neck was draped with a *campaka* flower garland with bees buzzing around it.”

### Commentary:

This form of Mahā Naṭarāja is a very special and rare form of Kṛṣṇa. He manifests this form only on very special occasions. When Kṛṣṇa disappeared from the *rāsa-līlā*, the *gopīs* started to lament for him. They were praying and crying for Kṛṣṇa together, and it was a very heart-rending scene. While the *gopīs* were praying, Kṛṣṇa was watching them from a distance and hearing everything they said. This became known as the Gopī-Gītā. After he heard to their prayers, Kṛṣṇa felt remorseful and regretted leaving them like that. He thought, “I gave them so much burning pain of separation. Now, how do I go in front of them? What shall I say to them?” He had no words to pacify them in their agony of separation. So, to appease their hearts, he manifested this very beautiful form of Mahā Naṭarāja.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śukadeva Gosvāmī described him as follows:

tāsām āvirabhūc chauriḥ smayamāna-mukhāmbujah  
pītāmbara-dharaḥ sragvī sāksān manmatha-manmathaḥ

“Just then, Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in the midst of the *gopīs*. His lotus face blossomed with a mild, gentle smile. Hanging from his neck was a garland of forest flowers, and he wore a golden-yellow garment (*pītāmbara*). What was the nature of his beauty? That beauty bewilders and captures the mind of Kāmadeva (Cupid), who himself bewilders and captures the minds of everyone.” (SB 10.32.2)

Kāmadeva, Pradyumna, is *sākṣāt manmatha*. He bewilders our minds and makes us succumb to lust. Everything about him is very attractive, especially his form and his weapon, which is his bow and arrows made from five different flowers, *pañca śara* (five arrows for the five senses). He shoots these arrows at us and we get pierced by his arrows of lust. There is only one person who can defeat Pradyumna. This is the *sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ* Kṛṣṇa with his very special beauty and supremely charming form of Mahā Nāṭarāja. This is a very special and attractive form which he does not exhibit very often. He only manifests this form when he is with the *vraja-gopīs*, who are endowed with corresponding qualities like *samarthā-rati* (*rati* capable of subjugating Kṛṣṇa).

Kṛṣṇa talks like he is singing, *vacana saṅgīta kora*. When he walks, he is not walking but dancing, *gamana nartana līlā*. Kṛṣṇa usually appears in this form of *sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ* to bewilder the mind of Kāmadeva, as only Kṛṣṇa can control him. When the *vraja-gopīs* started to pray to Kṛṣṇa by singing the Gopī-Gītā, he decided to manifest this special Mahā Nāṭarāja form.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī was narrating Bhāgavatam to Parīkṣit Mahārāja, he said, “When Kṛṣṇa was acting like a *śauri*, a *kṣatriya*, he killed all his enemy warriors. That is the dharma of *kṣatriyas*. They kill in battle, as part of their duty. Kṛṣṇa was a *kṣatriya* by blood, and it was natural for him to kill in battle. After the Gopī-Gītā, he repented for inflicting his *kṣatriya* nature on the gentle and innocent *vraja-vadhus*. He felt ashamed that he had inflicted deep wounds in their hearts using his warrior-like tendency. They were simple, soft hearted *vraja-vadhus*, not warriors. Although he repented, he was not able to express his regret, so he manifested this beautiful form to pacify their wounded hearts.

Now a similar situation arose, where he was at a loss for words to express himself. The only solution was to manifest this beautiful form and appear in front of Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*. The *gopīs*, the *vraja-vadhus*, are very merciful to Kṛṣṇa. Every time he cheats them or causes them pain, they get easily pacified by his sweet words. Then they forgive him, forget his wrong-doing and accept him again.

Thereby Kṛṣṇa came out from the *kuñja* in the form of Mahā Nāṭarāja, *śyāma kānti rasete jhāmore*, his bodily effulgence filled the whole directions. But this time his beautiful form was not having the usual effect on the *vraja-vadhus*. When they saw him coming out in that form, they said sarcastically: “O *lubdha bhṛṅga* (greedy bee), once again you come here?



You have so much greed to taste honey from different flowers. So, now you have come back here to again try and bewilder us.” He has decorated himself with a beautiful *campaka* garland and there were many honey bees buzzing around the garland. “And you have also brought along your dear friends, the honey bees, to get their support?”

When he came out, he first looked at all the *gopīs* one by one. Rādhārāṇī and Anāṅga were seated with their backs to Kṛṣṇa, so they did not see him coming out. The *sakhīs* were standing facing his direction, so they saw Kṛṣṇa walking towards them dressed very charmingly. He looked at each one of them to try and understand what was going on. He was trying to figure out by judging from their facial expressions if they were happy or upset. He was anxious to look at Rādhārāṇī’s face to understand her mood, but he could only see her back. He stood there in front of the *kuñja*. All the *sakhīs* were anxiously waiting to see what he would say to Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa was waiting for Rādhārāṇī to turn around and look at him. In what mood will she turn around? Will it be pleasing and loving, or will it be a mood of anger? What will she say to him? We will hear next.

Kṛṣṇa had very confidently walked out of the *kuñja* with the great hope that his captivating Mahā Natarāja form would bewilder Rādhārāṇī and her *sakhīs*. He had expected them to be awe struck by his breath-taking form and by such intoxication forget all his faults. But when the *sakhīs* saw him appear with this gorgeous form, they had only one thought, that this debauchee is still not satisfied. He has now draped himself in this form to attract another prey, just like a honey bee hopping from one flower to another. Kṛṣṇa anxiously waited for Rādhārāṇī to turn around and look at him.

kṛṣṇa yaiche taḍit mājhe, ghana puñja taiche sāje,  
kimvā hema madhye nīlamanī  
beḍi sakhī cāri bhite, nirakhae eka cite,  
rasamaya rasaguṇa khani (10)

“Kṛṣṇa, who is the reservoir of all *rasika* qualities, appeared in his magnificently enchanting form, looking like a cloud within a lightning bolt, or a blue sapphire set in gold, with the *sakhīs* staring at him from all sides.”

### Commentary:

All the *sakhīs* were staring at him. They were amazed to see something very peculiar in his appearance. Kṛṣṇa has a dark bluish

complexion, like a blue-sapphire jewel. Naturally, the effulgence that emanates from him should also be dark blue. But, this time they saw an aura of golden effulgence along with the blue effulgence. The *sakhīs* were puzzled and started whispering among themselves, “How is it that this *indranīla-kānta-maṇi* (The sapphire jewel of lovers) has a golden effulgence adorning his blue effulgence?” They were wondering, where it came from and why it was there?

One *mañjarī*, who had been inside the *kuñja*, knew the reason, and she said: “This golden effulgence is Anaṅga’s. Inside the *kuñja*, we saw that while they were both immersed in each other, they suddenly merged into one consciousness and their forms became one. We saw the blue and golden effulgence merge into one form. This golden effulgence you see in Kṛṣṇa is Anaṅga’s. Although she is physically separate, her heart is still in *tādātmya* within him. They are still not able to separate themselves from each other in their consciousness.” All the *kiṅkarīs*, who were inside the *kuñja*, witnessed their merging into one form.

The reason why, the *mañjarīs* are privileged to enter inside the *kuñja* during the confidential pastimes is because they have a very special quality. They are very secretive and will never disclose to anyone what they witness during the intimate pastimes inside the *kuñja*. The *sakhīs*, who are not allowed inside, sometimes ask the *kiṅkarīs* what they saw, but they refuse to disclose anything. They are very strict when it comes to concealing the *nikuñja-līlās*. They do not even reveal anything to the senior *sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā. If the *sakhīs* insist too much, they say, “Why don’t you ask Rādhārāṇī? Why are you asking me?” If the *sakhīs* still keep insisting, saying, “You were inside the *kuñja* and you saw with your eyes what was going on, so why don’t you share something with us!” Then the *kiṅkarīs* reply very shrewdly, “Yes, we were serving there, but our eyes were closed, so we did not see anything.” In this way they adamantly refuse to disclose anything.

Kṛṣṇa waited for a while for Rādhārāṇī to turn around and look towards him, but she still did not. He was a little confident after seeing the expressions on the *sakhīs* faces, that they are not really upset with him. This was surprising for him and he sensed that something unusual had happened before he came to Anaṅga Mañjarī’s *kuñja*. Kṛṣṇa got a little impatient and he went closer to where Rādhārāṇī was seated. He was curious to see the expression on her face, and finally he saw her.

tabe vṛṣabhānu sutā, puchae rasera kathā,  
 kuñje anaṅga mañjarī vilāsa  
 autsukyete beri beri, puche sabhe yatna kori,  
 kohe kṛṣṇa kori parihāsa (11)

“Vṛṣabhānu’s daughter then enquired about his intimate pastimes in Anaṅga Mañjarī’s *kuñja*. All the *sakhīs* surrounded him and were eagerly waiting to hear with great curiosity. Kṛṣṇa then started his joking words.”

### Commentary:

On seeing Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī said, “O Kṛṣṇa, if you really want to please us, then please relate to us what happened inside the *kuñja*. All of us are eager to hear. We want to know how both of you satisfied each other.” Anaṅga is very mysterious. No one can understand her emotions. It is impossible to realize the nature of the *mañjarīs*, especially Anaṅga Mañjarī, whose mood is very unpredictable. “We are trying so hard to persuade her to speak, but till now she has not revealed anything. She has become quiet and won’t say anything. I can understand she is still lost in her ecstasy of your meeting, so we are asking you what happened inside the *kuñja*.”

They started asking very intimate questions, “O Kṛṣṇa, we see so many signs on her body. We can only see the uncovered part, are there more marks under her covered part?” They were very inquisitive to know every detail.

Kṛṣṇa felt intimidated and embarrassed. He said, “Oh! How can you ask such personal questions? Surely Rādhē knows everything that happened inside. She is well experienced in this matters.” Then he started to get tricky and started blurting out all his intimate moments with Rādhārāṇī, thus embarrassing her. Rādhārāṇī then said, “Oh Kṛṣṇa, why are you revealing all these intimate affairs in front of all these *sakhīs*? Don’t you know they are *mukharas* (talkative), especially, Lalitā? They will not say anything in front of leave, they will start teasing me. All this is very intimate and confidential. You should be more discreet, Kṛṣṇa.”

“O Rādhē, you are feeling embarrassed to disclose our secret affair, but you want me to disclose Anaṅga’s intimate meeting with me in her *kuñja*? Since you and your *sakhīs* are curious to know about what happened with me and Anaṅga, I am explaining the details about our pastimes, as it is the same thing that happened between me and Anaṅga. What I do with you, is what I did with Anaṅga.”

tabe kṛṣṇa rādhā indu, nirakhi rasera sindh  
 uthalilo umadhi anande  
 rādhānujā saṅge hari, ye rūpe vilāsa kori,  
 kautuke kohoe sakhī vṛnde (12)

“Kṛṣṇa then glanced towards Rādhā’s face. His bliss welled up seeing her moon-like face, which was an ocean of *rasa* for him. The *sakhīs* then teasingly started enquiring about His conjugal affairs with Rādhā’s younger sister.”

### Commentary:

Then the *sakhīs* said: “O yes Kṛṣṇa, you can first tell us more details about what happened between you and Rādhā, and then you can tell us about you and Anaṅga. We want to know both.” Rādhārāṇī was now caught in a predicament. She closed her eyes and covered her face out of embarrassment. Lalitā asked, “Why are you covering your face Rādhā? Anaṅga is covering herself to hide all the marks on her body. Are you placing yourself in her shoes? We insist we want to hear everything. You do not have to feel shy in front of us. We are all ladies.”

Rādhārāṇī tried to stop Kṛṣṇa; she kept tugging at his hands to make him stop. Kṛṣṇa glanced at Rādhā’s face, which was looking like a full moon, a very special full moon. He was feeling so fortunate and proud. He was thinking, “The universe has a moon in the sky, but it is not pure. It is contaminated with some curse and it is filled with some black spots. But in my sky, I have an *akalaṅka pūrṇa candra*, which is pure and free from contamination. It is complete with all sixteen *kalas*, like the full moon on *pratipadā* (the first day after *pūrṇimā* day).” Whenever, Kṛṣṇa looks at Rādhārāṇī’s face, he feels very fortunate to have a full moon which dissipates his darkness and keeps his heart illuminated with its brightness.

Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī do not need to speak aloud. They communicate just by touching each other or looking into each other’s eyes. When Rādhārāṇī held his hand, Kṛṣṇa looked at her and he understood that she did not want him to reveal all their intimate pastimes. Then Kṛṣṇa stopped his discussions about Rādhārāṇī and was going to continue about his meeting with Anaṅga. He turned to her and asked, “O Anaṅga! They are enquiring about our meeting, so what should I tell them?” He touched her chin and lifted her face up. She was so shy, that she had her head lowered all the time. He said, “Anaṅga, look at me. Why are you so shy? Everyone here is our dear friend. Your elder sister loves you so much; she loves you more than

me. I have just realized that our meeting was arranged by her. Anaṅga! You have to be grateful to her for this. It is feminine nature to never share one's beloved with anyone. Your sister is exceptional, for her heart is very compassionate and her love for me is unconditional. It is the purest of the pure. She is now asking me about the details of our meeting. I am obliged to tell her something. Please look at me. You do not have to say anything. Just by your glance I will assume that you are giving me your permission."

Anaṅga looked up at Kṛṣṇa, speaking to him through her eyes, "Yes Kṛṣṇa, I am deeply grateful to her. She ordered me to serve you. I had no independent desire for you. but when she ordered me to serve you, as she does, spontaneously this desire appeared in my heart to please you, as she wished."

In a relationship, a lover and beloved must have mutual feelings. *Mañjarīs* are also friends like the *sakhīs*, but they do not share the same mood. They only have a serving mood for Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī, as a *kinkarī*. This had not been Anaṅga Mañjarī's desire. It was all pre-arranged by Rādhārāṇī. She told Anaṅga to go to her Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja Kuṅja and wait there for Kṛṣṇa. When she ordered Anaṅga, she showered her blessings and empowered her to render the service. All of a sudden, the desire and mood of Rādhārāṇī appeared in Anaṅga's heart. Anaṅga then admitted to Kṛṣṇa in front of everyone, that it was with Rādhārāṇī's blessings and desire that everything had happened. She said, "I really do not know if I have satisfied you properly, but I am very satisfied, and I am still filled with the ecstasy of our meeting in the *kuṅja*. I am still there with you in my mind, although I am now out of *kuṅja*." Then she told him that he could tell the *sakhīs* and her sister about their meeting discreetly. She pleaded with her eyes not to place her in an embarrassing situation in front of everyone.

Then Kṛṣṇa discreetly started describing their pastimes without removing the curtain of the whole scenario. He said, "Anaṅga is non-different from her sister, but at same time she has a very special quality different from Rādhā." The *sakhīs* were very curious to know, what Anaṅga's special quality was in comparison to Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa explained, "Anaṅga is the most exalted among all the *mañjarīs*." The *mañjarīs* have this specialty of offering service with an unflinching surrendered mood. They do everything with complete obedience to the master in the mood of a *kinkarī*. However, This is different from *dāsyā-bhāva*, the mood of servitude. In *dāsyā-bhāva*, they might sometimes have to make decisions for the master. The *kinkarīs* do not doubt or question. They just follow exactly what the master orders. If the master says, "You have to slit your throat," they would

do it without any hesitation.<sup>28</sup> In the scriptures this single-minded surrender mood of a *kiṅkarī* is generally recommended for disciples to have with their guru.

In Hari Bhakti Vilāsa, it is mentioned one can examine one's guru in every way before initiation. That is not an offence. But after initiation, *guror ājñām avicāraṇīyām*, a disciple should not doubt the advice or instruction of *śrī-guru* at any time. In Bhakti Sandarbha however, it is mentioned that, if anything the guru says is not in accordance with the scriptural injunctions, then one can disobey the guru. Whatever our guru says must be within the code of scriptural conduct. Guru's advice must be for the progress of our *bhajana*, not for the benefit of our material life. Guru is generally there to guide us for our material and spiritual welfare. Sometimes we may go to guru for material advice and he may choose to give advice according to time, place and circumstance, but that is not his real duty. It is only out of his compassion that he does this, but his main duty is to be there to support our *bhajana*, to guide us for our spiritual benefit. Whenever *śrī-guru* gives advice for the sake of our *bhajana*, following the scriptural injunctions, it will be a great offence to doubt and examine him. We must be blind followers.<sup>29</sup>

The day we have taken initiation from *śrī-guru* we have actually offered ourselves to his lotus feet. We do not have any right to examine him anymore. We must follow the single-minded surrendered mood of the *kiṅkarīs*. At initiation, *śrī-guru* accepts the responsibility of taking us from this material existence and placing us at the lotus feet of Rādhārāṇī. He knows what is best for us. His advice and instructions to his disciples can vary according to their advancement. Sometimes Gurudeva may give more attention to his wayward disciples, just the way parents may give special attention to their misbehaved children. Kṛṣṇa is emphasising this single-minded surrender through the example of Anaṅga Mañjarī's service mood. She follows all the orders of Rādhārāṇī, word for word, without any self-regard.

We have to know that there is a difference between a *mañjarī* and a *kiṅkarī*. Although the *mañjarīs* have a *kiṅkarī* mood, they are still known as *mañjarīs*. *Mañjarīs* are more special than the *kiṅkarīs*, because the *kiṅkarīs* need to receive verbal instruction and they follow blindly as instructed. But

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<sup>28</sup> That's a bad example of *guru-niṣṭha*. Such a scenario is not possible in a loving relationship. What genuine guru would ever give such an order?

<sup>29</sup> Nowhere in *śāstra* does it say that the disciple should follow the guru's order blindly. I doubt Premgopal Gosvāmī wants to have blind followers.

the *mañjarīs* do not have to be told; they can feel the heart of their master. They know exactly, what to do according to time, place and circumstance. Just by looking at Rādhā and Govinda, the *mañjarīs* know exactly what they need and provide it without being asked. After the swing play, when Yugala get tired, the *mañjarīs* offer sandalwood pulp on the body of Rādhā-Govinda. They can understand that they are feeling hot and need to be cooled down.

Kṛṣṇa is describing and glorifying Anaṅga Mañjarī's special mood when she was with him in the *kuñja*. He said, "She is more special than Rādhā,<sup>30</sup> because she served me in the mood of a beloved *mañjarī*. She knew how to serve me according to my taste and desire without being told. You cannot imagine how much I was satisfied by her. I am unable to describe it. I can only say: *madhuram, madhuram, madhuram*, it was so sweet, so sweet, so sweet. I cannot explain how I felt when she embraced me. I do not have adequate words to explain what I felt in my heart; only the heart can express it fully. You have to listen to my heart to understand my actual feelings. So, place your ear on my heart, not on my verbal expressions. All verbal expressions fail to express my feelings. All my experiences with her are still dancing in my heart. I am still inside the *kuñja* with her, although I am now externally separated from her."

When Kṛṣṇa thus expressed his feelings, all the *sakhīs* and Rādhārāṇī said, "Kṛṣṇa you are right. No one can express these feelings, as they are feelings of *anubhāva* (experiential) realizations."

Kṛṣṇa is *avāṇ-mānasa-gocara* (beyond the description of words or the imagination of the mind). He is a truth that cannot be realized with our material senses or our mind. It is impossible to understand Kṛṣṇa or explain his activities with words. The truth about Anaṅga Mañjarī is higher than Kṛṣṇa and truths about Rādhārāṇī are the highest. If Kṛṣṇa is *avāṇ-mānasa-gocara*, then what will Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rādhārāṇī be? No one can give proper explanations about them, not even Kṛṣṇa.

That is why Kṛṣṇa said, "O Rādhē! I tried to measure the depth of the *mādhurya* of your love, but I failed. It is beyond my ability to measure it, because I have a very small heart with so many limitations. No one can measure or explain your *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*. I am here in Vṛndāvana only to discover the depth of your love. I am indebted to you for your love."

When Kṛṣṇa spoke all these words, the *sakhīs* said, "O Kṛṣṇa, now we realize what happened inside the *kuñja* with you and Anaṅga. You have told us enough. You were perfectly discreet and we do not want you to

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<sup>30</sup> This must be a mistake. No one is more special than Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

disclose your intimate affairs any further. You can close the curtains of your *kuñja-līlā*. We will relish it behind closed curtains. Kṛṣṇa, compared to this Mahā Natarāja form of yours, the most relishable supreme *darśan* for our eyes is when you are with Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. We pray to always have this rare *darśan*.”

Saying this, all of a sudden, the *sakhīs* caught hold of Kṛṣṇa, taking him by surprise. They placed him between Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga. Kṛṣṇa was now seated in the middle, between his two beloveds; Rādhārāṇī on his left side and Anaṅga on his right.<sup>31</sup> Kṛṣṇa was perplexed. He again became a little suspicious, as to whether all this was a trick being played on him by the *sakhīs*. Maybe severe punishment was waiting for him later after this ecstasy.

There is a fire sacrifice where animals are offered in the fire. It is called *paśu-bali*. Before the animal is killed, *abhiśeka* is performed for the animal with milk, honey and yoghurt. Then the animal is fed sumptuously and once it is fully satisfied, they slaughter it. Kṛṣṇa was thinking, “Maybe I am in the same situation as the *paśu-bali*. After offering me all these ecstatic moments, they are going to slaughter me.” While all these thoughts were running through his mind, a very spectacular change took place.

All this while, Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga were still merged as one in their consciousness, but suddenly Rādhārāṇī’s golden effulgence started merging with both Kṛṣṇa’s and Anaṅga’s. All three consciousnesses became *tādātmya* with one another. This amazing scenario of the supreme absolute consciousness in a complete whole is seen here in the merging of these three separate aspects of divinity into one, merged in the pinnacle of their divine trance in the highest ecstatic bliss. The actual truth is that all the *sakhīs* had been waiting for an opportunity to see this rare *darśan* for a very long time. Finally, they were able to see this unique *darśan*, wherein these three supreme personalities merged into one consciousness.

Viśākhā *sakhī* made Kṛṣṇa hold his flute. Then she requested Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga to play the flute along with Kṛṣṇa. Anaṅga Mañjarī was hesitant as she was still feeling very shy. Now she was not alone with Rādhārāṇī. Everyone was watching her like in a stage performance. Rādhārāṇī coaxed Anaṅga to join them. All three then held the flute together with their heads facing each other, focused on the holes of the flute. They looked like three lotus flowers cupped together holding the flute, which itself looked like a lotus stem holding three lotus flowers. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*

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<sup>31</sup> Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭika says that when the three of them are together, Anaṅga Mañjarī is on Kṛṣṇa’s left and Rādhārāṇī is on his right. (4.30)



were watching this most amazingly spectacular scene. All three of them were rotating. Their forms kept changing. Sometimes Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga merged into one form next to Kṛṣṇa, and sometimes all three forms merged into one. Who can describe with words what they witnessed? The *gopīs* requested them to stay that way for some time. They wanted to enjoy the *darśan* of this rare, ecstatic form for as long as possible. They danced and sang, circumambulating the three supreme forms in oneness, as they had done in the *rāsa-līlā*. This time Kṛṣṇa was in the middle with Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga on both his sides.

After sometime, taking control of their emotions, the *gopīs* stood in front of Kṛṣṇa and said, “Today we had the most blissful time enjoying your supreme beauty, accompanied by both Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga. We had had the desire to see this astonishing *darśan* for a long time. Today that desire is fulfilled. We would like to make another request.”

Kṛṣṇa asked, “O *gopīs*, how can I please you? You have always offered me so much pleasure and have offered your lives to me without expecting anything in return. It is my greatest good fortune to taste such nectarean honey from your beautiful hearts. Although you are sometimes chastising me, because of my nature of a honey bee, even that chastisement is like honey to me. I accept this fault of mine; it is my weakness. I enjoy collecting honey from different flowers that are not any ordinary flowers. They are very special flowers, like you. I am indebted to all of you. Please tell me, how I can serve you?”

tabe nānā sevā kori, sukhe santoṣilā hari,  
yāra yei citte abhilāṣa  
rādhā kṛṣṇa sakhī saṅge, colilā ānanda raṅge,  
yāra yathā monera ullāsa (13)

“Then all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* began their service to please all three of them, according to their own heart’s desires. Rādhārāṇī’s, Kṛṣṇa and Anaṅga with all the *sakhīs*, went on enjoying their blissful pastime with great joy and ecstasy.”

### Commentary:

*Taba nānā sevā kori, sukhe santoṣilā hari, yāra yei citte abhilāṣa*; then the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* began to serve all three of them according to their respective services. Some started singing, some played musical instruments, some offered fruits, foodstuffs, and betel leaves with camphor,

some started to dance, some played the flute, and some started to decorate Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga's hair. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* offered their service to the three divine personalities in the very beautiful environment in the *kuñja* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, Śrī Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja Kuñja. The lovely Himalayan breeze was blowing across the Yamunā river, which is just next to the *kuñja*.

In the diagram of the Yogapīṭha, it is situated on the north eastern side of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. This is what we should meditate on during our Yogapīṭha *smaraṇa* of Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja Kuñja.

Then the *sakhīs* said, "O Kṛṣṇa, after accepting our service, we want all three of you to bless us and grant us with one more request." The *sakhīs* are now requesting the three divine personalities to fulfil one more desire of theirs. We will hear in the next verse how Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī will fulfil their desires.

When Kṛṣṇa asked them, "How should I please you?" The *sakhīs* said, "It is our great desire that you dance with Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga while we sing and play musical instruments. We want to see something more astonishing compared to what we have seen so far." Then they started singing. All the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā started to play and sing. All of them are expert singers and musicians in playing all instruments. Lalitā is expert in playing the Vīṇā, and Viśākhā is an expert *mṛdaṅga* player. With all the other *tāla-vadyas*, musicians, they started singing and playing their instruments. Rādhārāṇī gestured to Kṛṣṇa and said, "You dance with Anaṅga first."

Kṛṣṇa took Anaṅga's hands and started dancing with her in front of Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs*. It was an astonishingly beautiful dance. Soon, Rādhārāṇī joined them and this was the moment all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* were waiting for. To everyone's amazement, while dancing, again all three of them merged together to become one. The same thing had happened when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa danced in *rāsa-rajani*. While dancing, they suddenly became one. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* had witnessed these many times. This time, it was not just two, but three of them merging into one. It was such a breath-taking, mesmerizing sight: the combination of three colours, Rādhārāṇī's golden on the left side, Kṛṣṇa's sapphire blue in the middle and Anaṅga Mañjarī's yellowish colour on the right.

When the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* saw this spectacular vision, they happily started glorifying it and applauding, "Jai Kṛṣṇa! Jai Rādhē! Jai Anaṅga!" Everyone was shouting loudly in ecstasy. Their bliss knew no bounds. Then slowly Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī separated and became three again.

When they finally got tired of dancing, the *sakhīs* served them. They told Kṛṣṇa to first drink the nectar that pours out from the moon-like face of Rādhārāṇī and then from Anaṅga. After that the *sakhīs* offered all three of them a very special nectarean drink they had prepared.

anaṅga ambuja līlā, kṛṣṇa yāte sukhī hoilā,  
rādhāra prerāṇe dui jane  
ṭhākura vṛndāvana ukti, pāñchālī chandete vyakti  
rādhānuja mādhaba saṅgame (14)

“Using the *pāñchālī* meter for the composition of these *ślokas*, by the blessings of Ṭhākura Vṛndāvana, I have narrated the pastimes of the union of Mādhava with Rādhā’s sister, Anaṅga Mañjarī. She fulfilled her sister’s desire to make Kṛṣṇa happy.”

### Commentary:

By the mercy of Rāmāi Ṭhākura we are so fortunate to have heard these intimate pastimes that happened in Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja Kuñja. It is a very unique and special *līlā*. Details such as these have never been mentioned by anyone in any other scripture. The speciality here is that we can taste *kṛṣṇa-prema* together with Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. Everywhere else we can only taste *kṛṣṇa-prema* with Rādhārāṇī. All the while we heard that Kṛṣṇa is endowed with sixty-four qualities, but in this *kuñja* he has one more extra quality. He extended his mood of surrender not only to Rādhārāṇī, but also to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Here, he has sixty-five qualities, which make him eligible to surrender to two ladies at the same time. In different scriptures her *kuñja* is mentioned a little differently, as Anaṅga Ānandāmbuja or Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja.

By the blessings of Ṭhākura Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has narrated the pastimes of the union of Mādhava with Rādhā’s sister, Anaṅga Mañjarī. She fulfilled her sister’s desire to make Kṛṣṇa happy.

Using the *pāñchālī* meter for the composition of the *ślokas*, he has revealed only as much as necessary to guide us in our meditation. He has kept everything hidden in his narrations, as these are all confidential secrets and should remain confidential. If he reveals everything openly, then there is nothing left for our own *sādhana*. He has given us enough guidelines to perform our Yogapīṭha-sevā. The rest will be revealed to us by the power of our *sādhana*. It will manifest in our hearts.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is now drawing the curtain on these pastimes. He will not reveal anything more. He has revealed what no one has ever revealed anywhere before. If we desire to have *darśan* of this *līlā* and serve in Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*, we have to start our meditation on these pastimes. We have to beg and pray to her and her *kiṅkarīs* to allow us to enter there.

Next Rāmāi Ṭhākura will describe the *mañjarīs* and *kiṅkarīs* of Anaṅga Mañjarī's group. He describes Vṛndā Devī, an intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī first. Then he describes the qualities and nature of five more *mañjarīs*: Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, Rasa Mañjarī, Maṇi Mañjarī, and Guṇa Mañjarī. Lastly, he mentions eight *kiṅkarīs* of Anaṅga Mañjarī, who are always serving her when she is with Kṛṣṇa in her *kuñja*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura concludes his description of these pastimes by giving a brief synopsis of the qualities and nature of the very intimate *mañjarīs* and *kiṅkarīs* of Anaṅga Mañjarī. He mentions five prominent *mañjarīs* out of the eight, who are always there to serve her when she is with Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa in their conjugal pastimes in the *kuñja*.

These *mañjarīs* have all different moods, natures and specialities. Each one takes care of different aspects of Rādhā-Govinda's and Anaṅga-Govinda's service. They serve Rādhā-Govinda in the same way that they serve Anaṅga-Govinda. All of them are her very intimate friends. They are Rūpa, Rati, Rasa, Maṇi and Guṇa *mañjarīs*. They are also very intimate friends of Rādhārāṇī and are known, as *priya-narma-sakhīs*. *Narma* means very intimate friend. They serve Rādhā-Govinda directly and at the same time guide other *mañjarīs*. When any new *sādhaka-mañjarī* joins in the divine couple's service, the older *mañjarīs* guide them, like an elder sister, in a very loving manner to prepare them for Rādhā-Govinda's service.

### Vṛndā Devī

ekhone kohie āra, saṅge yoto sakhī tāra,  
nāma guṇa rūpa vivaraṇa  
prathamete vṛndādevī, nija dāsī saṅge sevi,  
tat sakhyas tad guṇākāra jana (15)

“I will describe here the *sakhīs*, who are always accompanying Anaṅga Mañjarī along with their names and qualities. First, I shall mention Vṛndā Devī, who serves along with her own *sakhīs* who are all the expansions of her own qualities.”

kauśalyā kāmīnī ādi, rāga vallikā kaumudī,  
 sāriketī pīka-kanṭhī imā  
 caturdaśa vaya rāmā, rūpe guṇe anupamā,  
 prati aṅge lāvaṇyera sīmā (16)

“They are Kauśalyā, Kāmīnī, Rāga-vallikā, Kaumudī, Sāriketī and Pīka-kanṭhī. They are fourteen years old; their forms and qualities are matchless and their bodies have unlimited elegance.”

### Commentary:

Vṛndā Devī is a very important *sakhī* and *mañjarī*.<sup>32</sup> She is fourteen years old. Her role in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is very important. She plays different roles, such as the protector of the *līlās*, and is sometimes also a messenger. She also arranges the various decorations of the *kuñjas* as appropriate for the pastimes. Her duty in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is not only when Kṛṣṇa meets Anaṅga Mañjarī, but also when he meets Rādhārāṇī. She plays the role of a playwright. Rādhārāṇī adheres to whatever Vṛndā Devī arranges.

She has vast knowledge of how to please Kṛṣṇa and is always contemplating how to please him in innumerable ways. She is also very near and dear to Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. Whenever Kṛṣṇa sees Vṛndā Devī approaching, he knows there is a message for him. When he is playing with his friends, she approaches in such a way that only he can see her. When Kṛṣṇa sees Vṛndā Devī approaching, he will somehow hide from His friends and meet her. He, too, sends his messages through her. She waits, hiding at a distance to get some message from Kṛṣṇa, indicating the location of the secret meeting places. Kṛṣṇa sees her, and as he passes near her, unnoticed by his friends he will give some signal which only she can understand. He may swing his herding stick in such a way that Vṛndā Devī understands that he is indicating *vetasi-kuñja*. If Kṛṣṇa touches and plays with his hair, Vṛndā Devī immediately understands that he is indicating *keśa-kuñja*. She is expert in reading the indications and signals of Kṛṣṇa about meeting places. She then goes to Rādhārāṇī to report the meeting place indicated by Kṛṣṇa and starts preparing for the *abhisāra*, meeting. Rādhārāṇī totally depends on Vṛndā Devī to arrange the appropriate attire she should wear and how the *kuñja* should be decorated.

<sup>32</sup> In Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā, Rūpa Gosvāmī classifies Vṛndā Devī as a messenger (2.87, 2.96-98). She is neither a *sakhī* nor a *mañjarī*. She is in the category of *dūtīs*, like Nāndīmukhī, a go-between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Vṛndā Devī uses her expertise to arrange everything for the day according to the lunar calendar. If it is the day of a dark moon, Vṛndā Devī advises Rādhārāṇī and all her *sakhīs* to be dressed in dark colours so that no one will notice them. This is why we dress the deities in different colours according to the position of the moon. On Ekādaśī day, they are dressed in red. On Pūrṇimā in complete white, and on Amāvasyā dark outfits. Even their ornaments match their dress. This is to prevent the neighbours from seeing them, when they leave for their *abhisāra*.

Another special quality of Vṛndā Devī is *rāmayeti rāma*: she who knows how to give pleasure to others. She is very expert in this since she knows very well how to please Kṛṣṇa and also has the ability to read Rādhārāṇī's mind. In the *līlā*, so many moods manifest in Rādhārāṇī. Sometimes she is angry with Kṛṣṇa when he cheats on her and she is overcome by *māna parijāya*, her sulky, angry mood. When she is in this mood, Kṛṣṇa takes shelter of either Viśākhā Sakhī or Vṛndā Sakhī. Both of them are *kṛṣṇa-anukulya*, favourable to Kṛṣṇa. Although they are Rādhārāṇī's *sakhīs*, they have a mood favourable towards Kṛṣṇa. This favourable mood is only to unite them. When Rādhārāṇī is angry with Kṛṣṇa, Lalitā Sakhī and some of her other *sakhīs* will add fuel to the fire. At this time Vṛndā Devī's duty is to subdue the blazing fire and bring about reconciliation. By her very persuasive words she will convince Rādhārāṇī to forgive Kṛṣṇa and accept him again. Viśākhā Sakhī is also in this same mood as Vṛndā Devī in always desiring to reunite them. At the same time, she will be very stern with Kṛṣṇa and warn him not to repeat his faults again. But Vṛndā Devī's way of dealing with Kṛṣṇa is very gentle. She will try to change his mind in a sweet and persuasive manner and make Kṛṣṇa totally submissive to Rādhārāṇī.

When she starts speaking, everyone attentively listens to her. Her manner of talking is attractive, like the singing of a cuckoo. She has a captivating, charming quality of speech, and she utilises this talent expertly in her *sevā*. She is very diligent when performing her duty as a protector of the *kuñja*. No one can enter without her permission. On *rāsa-rajani*, Mahādeva wanted to join the Rāsa-līlā. It is mentioned in certain scriptures that he arrived there before all the other *vraja-vadhus*. Kṛṣṇa recognised Mahādeva Śaṅkara in the form of a *gopī*. In some scriptures it is mentioned, that Vṛndā Devī recognised him first. She is the protector of the Rāsa-līlā, the most confidential and crown jewel of all *līlās*. Rādhārāṇī had instructed Vṛndā Devī to be very strict and not allow entrance to anyone who is unqualified. Mahādeva had a great desire to participate in this *līlā*. He

disguised himself as a very beautiful *vraja-gopī* and no one could recognise him, not even Devī Pārvatī. But Vṛndā Devī recognised him and stopped him from entering. He kept insisting that he was a *vraja-gopī*, but she strictly denied him entrance, telling him that he was neither a female nor a *vraja-gopī*. He asked her how she could attest to his ineligibility for entrance, and Vṛndā Devī then pointed to all the *vraja-gopīs*, who were already inside the *rāsa-līlā-maṇḍala*. They had come there running blindly in madness upon hearing Kṛṣṇa's flute call. Their hearts were captivated by the flute sound. They lost their bodily consciousness and came running hastily unaware of their external condition. She pointed out to Mahādeva, "Do you see how they have decorated themselves? Their bangles are on their feet, their ankle bells are hanging on their neck and some have even forgotten to wear their clothes. So, how is it possible, that a *vraja-gopī* would come so beautifully dressed and decked like you? This is your disqualification and this is how I recognised you are not one of them." Vṛndā Devī asked him, "Who are you and why are you here? Who sent you here and why?" Mahādeva revealed his form, as Lord Śiva. He said, "I have a great desire to meet Kṛṣṇa and join the Rāsa-līlā with him, but now I realize that I am not qualified." Vṛndā Devī called for Kṛṣṇa, and he was surprised to see Mahādeva. Kṛṣṇa asked him, "Why are you here?" Mahādeva confessed his desire and Kṛṣṇa gave him the position of the gatekeeper of the Rāsa-dance, the protector of the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. This is how he got the name, Gopeśvara Mahādeva. In the temple of Gopeśvara Mahādeva in Vṛndāvana, the Śiva-Liṅga is decorated as a *gopī*. Vṛndā Devī is the group leader of all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* who are in charge of the *abhisāra* pastimes. Her beauty is like that of the *kaumudī* lotus. Unlike the lotuses which are connected with the sun, the *kaumudī* is a lotus connected with the moon. Normally lotuses bloom when the sun rises, but *kaumudī* lotuses bloom when the moon rises. They cannot tolerate the powerful sun. When Kṛṣṇa Candra rises in the *līlā* sky, she blooms to please Kṛṣṇa, just as flowers open their buds to give pleasure to everyone and spread their fragrance everywhere, soothing everyone's mind. Whenever Kṛṣṇa Candra appears, the *kaumudī* Vṛndā Devī blooms to please him. During the day Kṛṣṇa likes to hold a lotus in his hand and swing it around. This lotus is known as the *līlā-kamala*. During the night if he needs a *līlā-kamala*, Vṛndā Devī is this *līlā-kamala*. Kṛṣṇa likes to play with her in the mood of a very intimate friend. He will ask her, "O Vṛnde, where is your *sakhī*? Please give me some news about her." Vṛndā will then run to Rādhārāṇī to see if there is any message for Kṛṣṇa.

In *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, the eightfold pastimes, she arranges all the different *līlās*. When Kṛṣṇa is back from his cow grazing, mother Yaśodā feeds Kṛṣṇa and keeps his remnants for Rādhārāṇī. Usually it is Vṛndā Devī who does the *sevā* of bringing these remnants to Rādhārāṇī.<sup>33</sup> She is active in all *līlās*. Without her there would be no *līlā* in Vraja. In the Yogapīṭha, her position is at the eastern entrance, as the gatekeeper. This is her role.

## Rūpa Mañjarī

After describing Vṛndā Devī, Rāmāi Ṭhākura goes on to mention the qualities of Rūpa Mañjarī. She is the next most important and intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī.

In his prayerful song, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura illustrates his one-pointed surrender to the *dīkṣā-paramparā* he belongs to, under the guidance of his *guru-mañjarī*, Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī. Lokanātha Gosvāmī's *mañjarī* form is Mañjūlālī Mañjarī and she serves directly under Rūpa mañjarī:

śrī-rūpa paścāte āmi rohibo bhīta hoiyā  
doñhe pūnaḥ kohibena āmā pāne cāiya  
śrī-rūpa-mañjarī tabe doñhā vākya śuni  
mañjūlālī dilo more ei dāsī āni

“Seeing me standing shyly behind Śrī Rūpa, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, with kind hearts will smilingly ask Śrī Rūpa, ‘Where have you brought this new maidservant from?’ Hearing Their enquiry, Śrī Rūpa will answer: “Mañjūlālī brought her and gave her to me. I examined her and found her to be very soft hearted and humble, therefore engaging her in Your service, I have kept her here”. Śrī Rūpa, after relating this to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, will mercifully engage Narottama Dāsa in the Divine Couple’s service.” (Prārthana, 19)

The two main leaders of all the *mañjarīs* are Anaṅga and Rūpa Mañjarī. When any *guru-mañjarī* introduces a new *mañjarī* to either Anaṅga or Rūpa, they both examine her to see if she has all the qualities, character and sentiments eligible for service engagement to Yugalā Kīśora. They will not wait for Rādhārāṇī to decide. They will both discuss and decide the eligibility of the new *sādhaka-mañjarī*.

<sup>33</sup> Govinda-Līlāmṛta states it is Tulasī and Kastūrī who do this *sevā*. Vṛndā’s domain is in the forest. She is not part of the *līlā* in Nandagrāma or Yāvaṭa.



Whichever lineage the *sādhaka* belongs to, they all have to go through Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī to gain permission for entering into *yugala-sevā*. Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are very intimate friends and never do anything without each other's consent. All the groups or *mañjarī* camps from different lineages follow the leadership of Rūpa Mañjarī, but those who are in the lineage of Anaṅga Mañjarī follow her. However, for service engagements both of them control everything and supervise all the *mañjarīs* together.

In the beginning, during our initial practicing stage, we will be guided by *śrī-guru-mañjarī* and will be advised to follow either of the group leaders, Anaṅga or Rūpa Mañjarī. When our heart starts to feel connected with Vṛndāvana and *līlā* starts to appear during *smaraṇa*, then automatically all other truths will be revealed to us. We will realize that we are not followers of either Anaṅga or Rūpa mañjarī, but both of them. They will decide who should be sent where and for which service, according to their nature.

Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura mentions this in his song, “After examining me, both of them will certify my eligibility. Then, Rūpa Mañjarī will take me to Yugala. At that moment, forgetting Anaṅga's and Rūpa Mañjarī's power, I will be in great anxiety whether Rādhārāṇī will accept me or not. However, my apprehension will soon leave me when, in front of the divine couple, Rādhārāṇī asks Rūpa, ‘O Rūpa! How did you find this new *mañjarī*? I know her; she is not unfamiliar to me.’” Both Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa will say this.

By the power of our practice, Bhakti Devī begins making all arrangements for this even while we are in the *sādhana* stage. We are always in connection with our goal and our *iṣṭadeva*. Therefore, they can recognise us when we finally meet them at the time of attaining our goal. Just to acknowledge this familiarity, they repeatedly ask our group leader about us, when we finally come face to face with them.

“O Rūpa, where did you find this new *kiṅkarī* (or new *mañjarī*)? She looks very sweet natured. I have known her for a long time, but cannot remember her name. Who is she?” Then Rūpa Mañjarī will explain everything about the new *mañjarī*. They only discuss this matter with Rādhārāṇī. All discussions about *mañjarīs* are only with Rādhārāṇī and have nothing to do with Kṛṣṇa.

Rūpa will then reply, “Oh Rādhē, Mañjūlalī brought this new *kiṅkarī*. She introduced her to me and told me that she is very soft hearted and humble. I examined her and found that Mañjūlalī is right. She does have

all these qualities.” Then Rūpa Mañjarī will speak in praise of my qualities. She will say, “O Rādhē, she is a really excellent cook too.” Rādhārāṇī has one hundred percent faith in Rūpa Mañjarī’s words. Without any doubt, she will immediately accept me in her heart and say, “Okay, from today whatever I offer to Kṛṣṇa will be cooked by her.” Then, Rūpa Mañjarī will say, “O Rādhē, when I found all these qualities in her, I engaged her in your *sevā* even before asking you.”

In this manner all the *mañjarīs* are granted entry into the divine couple’s service. When the *guru-mañjarī* hand us over to Anaṅga and Rūpa Mañjarīs, they take over the responsibility of engaging us in the *sevā* of Yugalā Kīśora.

śrī rūpa mañjarī nāma, kṛṣṇa preme rasa dhāma,  
ā-veda daśa varṣa sthiti  
pīnonatta payodharā, pītavarṇa aṅga bharā,  
śikhi piñcha vastra śobhe tati (17)

“Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī is the abode of *kṛṣṇa-prema-rasa* and is less than 14 years old. She has beautiful raised breasts; her body complexion is fair and she wears beautiful peacock-feather coloured garments.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura mentions her age, as *aveda-daśa*. “Veda” means four and ‘daśa’ means ten, so *veda-daśa* means 14 years. In some places it is mentioned that she is 14 years old, but Rāmāi Ṭhākura says *aveda-daśa*, which means close to 14 years, that is about 13 years 6 months. We will understand her exact age whether it is thirteen and half years or fourteen through our spiritual practice. From scriptures we can only know that she is *ā-veda daśa varṣa sthiti*, about 13 years and 6 months old. She is full of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, but this statement is contradictory to what we have heard about *mañjarī-bhāva*, which is attachment only to Rādhārāṇī. Rāmāi Ṭhākura states she is *kṛṣṇa preme rasa dhāma*, she is the embodiment of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura is trying to explain that to be able to serve anyone we need to have love for them. It is not possible to serve anyone properly without love for them. Service can only be performed when our heart and attachment is there. Any kind of activity, if it is not performed from the heart, then it will not be fruitful. It will be very dry, devoid of love and passion. Service unto Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa by the *mañjarīs* is not like performing duties. They love both Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, and everything they do is performed with love

from their heart. They may be serving Kṛṣṇa through Rādhārāṇī, but they are actually serving Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī is also serving Kṛṣṇa, and all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are assisting her.

During the *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, the eight-fold pastimes, the *mañjarīs* offer foodstuffs according to the *līlās*. When foodstuffs such as fruits and sweets, are offered, Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa have their own style of eating them. They do not place the foodstuffs directly in their own mouth, but offer it to each other's mouth first. Sometimes Rādhārāṇī feeds Kṛṣṇa and after that she honours his *prasād*, and sometimes it is the opposite; Kṛṣṇa feeds Rādhārāṇī and accepts her remnants.

There is one beautiful *stotra* (prayer) called Catu Puṣpāñjali, which is a prayer for *mañjarī-bhāva-sādhana* in Stava-mālā composed by Rūpa Gosvāmī. Rūpa Gosvāmī represents our aspiration in praying to be accepted as a *mañjarī*:

### Śrī Catu-Puṣpāñjali A Handful of Flower-like Prayers

nava-gorocana-gaurīm  
pravarendīvarambaram  
maṇi-stabaka-vidyoti-  
veṇī-vyalaṅgana-phanam (1)

“Oh Radhe, You are fair as fresh *gorocana*, your garments are the colour of a splendid blue lotus, and your glistening jewel and flower decorated braid is like the hood of a serpent.”

upamana-ghaṭa-mana-  
prahari-mukha-maṇḍalam  
navendu-nindi-bhalodyat-  
kasturī-tilaka-śriyam (2)

“Oh Radhe! Your beautiful face crushes the pride of anything to which it may be compared. Your beautiful forehead is decorated with musk, *kasturi tilaka*, and rebukes the crescent moon.”

bhru-jītanāṅga-kodaṇḍam  
lola-nīlalakavalim  
kajjalajjvalata-rajac-  
cakorī-caru-locanam (3)

“Oh Radhe! Your eyebrows are like the bow of Kamadeva. With dark, curly locks of hair, your glistening mascara-decorated eyes are more beautiful than two splendid *cakorī* birds.”

tila-puṣṣabha-nasagra-  
 virajad-vara-mauktikam  
 adharoddhuta-bandhukaṁ  
 kuṇḍalī-bandhura-dvijam (4)

“O Radhe! The tip of your sesame-flower-like nose is decorated with a beautiful splendid pearl. Your lips rebuke the *bandhuka* (pomegranate) flowers, and your teeth are more beautiful than pearls. Your smile looks like a row of *kuṇḍali*-flowers falling down.”

sa-ratna-svarṇa-rajīva-  
 kaṁṇikakṛta-kaṁṇikam  
 kasturī-bindu-cibukaṁ  
 ratna-graiveyakojjvalam (5)

“Oh Radhe! You wear earrings made of jewels and the buds of golden lotuses. Your chin is decorated with a dot of musk and your neck is adorned with a splendid jewel necklace.”

divyaṅgada-pariṣvaṅga-  
 lasad-bhuja-mṛṇalikam  
 valari-ratna-valaya-  
 kalalambi-kalavikam (6)

“Oh Radhe! Your splendid lotus-stem-like arms are embraced by glistening armlets and your hands are decorated with tinkling sapphire bracelets.”

ratnaṅgurīyakollasi-  
 varagguli-karambujam  
 manohara-maha-hara-  
 vihari-kuca-kuḍmalam (7)

“Oh Radhe! The fingers of your lotus hands shine with jewelled rings and on your beautiful budding bosom a charming necklace playfully moves.”

romali-bhujagī-murdha-  
 ratnabha-taralañcitam  
 vali-trayi-lata-baddha-  
 kṣīṇa-bhaṅgura-madhyamam (8)

“Oh Radhe! The jewel that decorates your head, looks like the jewel on a serpent’s hood. Your graceful navel is beautified by fine hairs, and your slender waist is bound by a vine of three folds of skin.”

mani-sarasanadhara-  
 visphara-śroni-rodhasam  
 hema-rambha-madarambha-  
 stambhanoru-yugakṛtim (9)

“O Rādhe! Your broad hips support a chain of small, jewelled bells, O queen whose two beautiful thighs stun the charming golden plantain trees.”

janu-dyuti-jīta-kṣulla-  
pīta-ratna-samudgagam  
śaran-nīraja-nīrajya-  
mañjira-viranat-padam (10)

“Oh Rādhe! Your knees defeat the topaz jewel-chest, and your feet and tinkling anklets are worshiped by the autumn lotus flowers.”

rakendu-koṭi-saundarya-  
jaitra-pada-nakha-dyutim  
aṣṭabhiḥ sattvikair bhavair  
akulī-kṛta-vigraham (11)

“Oh Rādhe! The splendour of your toenails defeats the beauty of millions full moons and your transcendental form is agitated by the eight *sāttvika bhāvas*.”

mukundaṅga-kṛtapaṅgam  
anaṅgormi-taraṅgitam  
tvam arabdha-śriyanandam  
vande vṛndavaneśvari (12)

“Oh Rādhe! You casts a sidelong glance at the transcendental body of Mukunda, who is then tossed about by the waves of amorous desire. Oh Rādhe! You are full of transcendental beauty and bliss, O queen of Vṛndāvana, I bow down and offer my respectful obeisances to you.”

ayi prodyan-mahā-bhāva-  
madhurī-vihvalantare  
aśeṣa-nayikāvasthā  
prakatyadbhuta-ceṣṭite (13)

“Oh Rādhe! Your heart is overcome by the sweetness of rising ecstatic love, and you display wonderful characteristics of all kinds of amorous heroines.”

sarva-mādhurya-viccholī-  
nirmanthita-padambuje  
indira-mṛgya-saundarya-  
sphurad-aṅghri-nakhāñcale (14)

“O enchantress of Vṛndāvana! Your lotus feet are filled with all sweetness and the beauty of your toenails is eagerly sought after by the goddess of fortune.”

gokulendu-mukhī-vṛnda-  
sīmantottama-sa-mañjarī  
lalitadi-sakhī-yutha-

jīvatu-smita-korake (15)

“O Queen of Vraja! You, who wears a flower on your parted hair, are the queen among the moon-faced girls of Gokula whose gracious smile is the life of Lalitā and your other friends.”

caṭulapaṅga-mādhurya-  
bindunmadita-madhava  
tata-pada-yaśaḥ-stoma-  
kairavānanda-candrike (16)

“O Radhe! Your sweet restless sidelong glance maddens Mādhava and you bring pride to your parents like blissful moonlight upon white lotuses.”

apara-karuna-pura-  
puritantar-mano-hrade  
prasīdāsmiṇ jane devī  
nija-dāsyā-sprha-juṣi (17)

“O Radhe, the lake of your heart is filled with a limitless flood of compassion. Please be kind to this maidservant who yearns to attain your service”

akaccit tvaṁ caṭu-paṭuna  
tena goṣṭhendra-sununa  
prārthyamana-calapaṅga  
prasāda drakṣyase maya (18)

“O Radhe! When will I see the charming prince of Vraja begging for the mercy of your restless sidelong glance? Sometimes He may order me through signals from His lotus eyes to bring some fruits and when I bring them, He will first place them in His mouth and then force you to take it from His mouth with your mouth.”

tvaṁ sadhu madhavī-puṣpair  
madhavana kala-vida  
prasadyamanam khidyantīm  
vījayiṣyamy ahaṁ kada (19)

“When artistic Mādhava carefully adorns your hair with *mādhavī* flowers, I will bring your comb and flowers, and make a garland for Him to place in your hair.”

keli-visraṁsino vakra-  
keśa-vṛndasya sundari  
saṁskaraya kada devi  
janam etaṁ nidekṣyasi (20)

“O Rādhē! I want to be there to help when Kṛṣṇa arranges and decorates your curly locks of hair, which are now disarrayed, because of your amorous pastimes!”

kada bimboṣṭhi tāmbūlaṁ  
maya tava mukhambuje  
arpyamanam vrajadhīśa  
sunur acchidya bhokṣyate (21)

“O Rādhē! As I offer a betel leaf and nuts mixed with camphor to your *bimba*-like lips, I would like to watch in bliss as the prince of Vraja snatches it away and enjoys it.”

vraja-rāja-kūmara-vallabha-  
kula-sīmanta-maṇi prasīda me  
parivara-ganasya te yatha  
padavī me na devīyasī bhavet (22)

“O Jewel among the beloveds of the prince of Vraja! Please be merciful to me. Let not the path of your intimate friends be far from me. Please accept me as your family member. I want to relish the sweetness of your pastimes.”

karunaṁ muhur arthaye param  
tava vṛndavana-cakravartīnī  
api keśirīpor yatha bhavet  
sa caṭu-prārthana-bhajanam janah (23)

Oh Rādhē, Queen of Vṛndāvana! I pray for Your mercy again and again, so that I may once become the object of Kṛṣṇa’s flattering prayers. (I will be Your maidservant and when You are angry with Kṛṣṇa, He will have to flatter me by saying: “O Sundarī (Beautiful one)! O Dayāvatī (Merciful one)! Please pacify Your Svāminī for Me, so that the fire of My separation from Her will be extinguished.”)

imaṁ vṛndavaneśvarya  
jano yaḥ paṭhati stavam  
caṭu-puṣpāñjalim nāma  
sa syad asyaḥ kṛpāspadam (24)

“May whoever read this prayer, which bears the name Catu-Puṣpāñjali to the Queen of Vṛndāvana, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, become the object of her mercy.”

This prayer is by Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is Rūpa Mañjarī and whose heart is full of love for Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī, is reciting this prayer, “O Rādhē! I will only be able to take *darśan* of these pastimes when you allow me to serve you, as one of your group members through your causeless mercy. I am

begging at every moment. My heart is longing for this causeless mercy of being accepted as one of your maidservants in your intimate circle.”

She knows that the only way to serve Kṛṣṇa is by making one’s heart full of love for Kṛṣṇa, as only then can we please him. When we love someone, we can read their mind and feel their mood and nature. Only by our unconditional love can we open their hearts.

The *mañjarīs* do not need to be told what to do, because they can feel everything just by looking at Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa with love. There are millions of *mañjarīs*, and if everyone is depending on being told what to do, then the situation would become very chaotic. In *nikuñja-sevā* everything goes on in silence. The *mañjarīs* are in the mood of *śanta-rasa* during this time of their *sevā*. The only time they use their voices is for singing or playing jokes with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; otherwise, everything is done in silence. Just by observing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the *mañjarīs* know exactly what is to be done.

Silence is observed for the divine couple to enjoy listening to the different sounds of nature in the environment. Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa enjoy listening to the chirping and singing of the birds. They also listen to the language of the plants, flowers and trees. It is mentioned in *rasa-śāstra* that sometimes Rādhārāṇī gives instructions to the breeze to bring some nice aroma from the flowers to please Kṛṣṇa.

This is the reality of the transcendental world. Everything there happens in the mood of pure love. By the presence of pure divine love, the consciousness expands and starts to feel the consciousness of all other sentient and non-sentient entities in the environment, like the water, air, plants and animals.

Similar to Vṛndā Devī, Rūpa Mañjarī has the same intimate relationship with Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. She is always in a serving mood. She does not ever play the role of pleasing Kṛṣṇa directly, like Anaṅga Mañjarī in the *kuñja*. With love for Kṛṣṇa, she serves him in the mood of a *mañjarī* with all her *sakhīs*. Her friends, who serve with her, are all expansions of her different qualities.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura gives a vivid description of the qualities of the most important five *mañjarīs* to help us realize and feel the pastimes. Without knowing them, it is not possible to get a clear picture as to why someone is doing a particular *sevā* in a certain mood.

tat sakhyas tad rūpākāra, sevā kore nirantara,

tad anugā sabhe ājñākārī

rūpavatī rasavatī, rasālikā raṅganetī,

rambhāvatī kalārūpa nārī (18)



“Her *sakhīs* are all endowed with forms and qualities like hers and are constantly serving under her guidance. They are Rūpavatī, Rasavatī, Rasālikā, Rangañetī, Rambhāvatī, and Kalārūpa.”

### Commentary:

The special quality of Rūpa Mañjarī is her beauty. She is beauty personified. She is also filled with all the different *rasas* and can easily attract Kṛṣṇa’s mind. Yet she will never make such an attempt, as her emotions are not in that mood for Kṛṣṇa. When a boy and a girl of the same age are not emotionally attached to each other as lovers, then obviously their relationship will be like that of siblings. Thus, her feelings for Kṛṣṇa are of sisterly love.

She plays a leading role in the *līlā-sevās* and is a skilful coordinator of the pastimes. She is a very intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī. She is always serving and at the same time guiding all the other *mañjarīs*, who follow her loving instructions with single-minded dedication as their leader.

Rūpa mañjarī instructs all of them in their various *sevās* before a *līlā* begins. She guides, instructs and advises them daily according to Vṛndā Devī’s plan. She delegates the services to everyone, as appropriate, and does not need to remind them again. The *mañjarīs* are very dedicated and attached to their service and strictly obey her instructions.

During *abhisāra*, Rādhārāṇī arrives with her *sakhīs* before Kṛṣṇa. The *mañjarīs* arrive before everyone else to prepare everything that is necessary for the *līlā*. They clean up the pathway, and after cleaning inside the *kuñja* thoroughly, they decorate it with fragrant flowers and jewels. Some arrange food and scented water, and others set up the swing.

The *līlās* may be the same every day, but the taste is different. Some days they arrange the *kuñja* with a very beautiful throne for the Divine Couple to sit on. Other days they may arrange a very nice swing. There are different kinds of swing decorations on different days which sometimes make use of flower creepers and sometimes ropes.

Rūpa Mañjarī gives instructions and distributes all the services to her *mañjarī* friends before the *līlā*. She refrains from giving orders in front of Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, as she does not want to disturb them. Mañjarīs never cause any disturbance for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa while they are in their confidential meeting. They only help them both relish each other’s love. They will bring betel leaves and give them to Rādhārāṇī to offer to Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes they bring some food and offer it to Kṛṣṇa for him to offer to Rādhārāṇī. Mañjarīs only help to increase their pleasure for each other. In

front of Yugala they do not make any noise or speak too much. They communicate by indicating with their eyes or hands. During the confidential pastimes only two persons speak: Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. When they are in the garden the *sakhīs* surround them and joke and laugh along with them and even at that time the *mañjarīs* do not speak. They respond only when something is asked, otherwise they remain silent.

Although all the *mañjarīs* have a *dāsī* mood in performing their service, they are intimate friends of Rūpa Mañjarī and are like sisters. Amongst themselves, the *mañjarīs* interact according to the culture of *sanātana-dharma*. Their exchange of respect and honour with each other is in accordance with the hierarchy of seniority in age. They are friends, and at the same time like younger sisters to Rūpa mañjarī, who is older than Anaṅga Mañjarī.

Within *madhura-rasa*, all the five primary *rasas* are present: *śanta-rasa* (neutral), *dāsyā-rasa* (servant), *sakhya-rasa* (friendly), *vātsalya-rasa* (parental) and *mādhurya-rasa* (beloved), which is the highest. All the different moods manifest automatically according to the time, place and circumstances of the pastimes. When the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are serving, they are in the *dāsyā* mood. When they are caring and nurturing, then the parental mood will manifest. When they are playing and joking, they are overcome by *sakhya-bhāva*. When they engage in very confidential pastimes, then the mood of a beloved takes over. *Santa-rasa* is observed by the *mañjarīs* when they keep silent during the intimate pastimes.<sup>34</sup>

There is something very special in the *mañjarīs*' mood, mainly with Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. They not only have these five primary *rasas*, but when necessary they please Kṛṣṇa in all the other secondary *rasas* as well, such as: *hāsyā*, *adbhuta*, *vīra*, *karuṇa*, *raudra*, *bībhatsa*, *bhaya*. All together there are twelve *rasas*. Kṛṣṇa is the source of all these different *rasas*; he is *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti*. Kṛṣṇa loves to relish all these different *rasas*.

There is a game played in Vraja during the Holi festival called the *lath-mar-kali*. It is a dance play where the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* beat Kṛṣṇa's *sakhās*, who protect themselves with a shield. This pastime is still observed in Vraja. The women and girls of Vraja attack and try to beat the boys with a stick. To play this *lath-mar-kali* game, one must have an aggressive mood;

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<sup>34</sup> *Sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* have a mixture of two *rāsas* only, *sakhya* and *mādhurya*, they don't have any other *rasa* (Prīti Sandarbha 84.6): "The Vraja *devīs* have *kāntā-bhāva* mixed with *sakhya*."

otherwise, it is not possible to play this game. The *mañjarīs* must also be physically strong, like a warrior fighting in battle.

Rūpa Mañjarī is also an expert in changing moods or *rasa*. She has the ability to follow the mood of the person who is present in front of her. If someone is in a quarrelsome mood with her, then she will engage with them in the same mood. If someone approaches her with soft and sweet words, then she will also reciprocate with soft and sweet words. When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have their love fights, Rūpa will guide Rādhārāṇī on what to do. She has the ability to control others.

Rūpa Mañjarī is endowed with strong leadership qualities, which makes her a natural, effective group leader of all the *mañjarīs*. That is why our *bhajana* path is known as *rūpānuga*. It is she, who is the expert in guiding and coordinating all her junior *mañjarīs* to please Kṛṣṇa in the different moods of *sevā*.

Kṛṣṇa is not satisfied with only the beloved mood. He likes a variety of different moods, like joking, fighting and so on. There is a story about how Kṛṣṇa enjoyed *vīra-rasa* (chivalry). Once, an *asura* called Gayāsura was angered by the killing of his father, Tripurāsura, and observed great penance to please Lord Śrī Hari. When the Lord appeared before him, Gayāsura requested Śrī Hari to make him a great warrior, powerful enough to defeat and kill Mahādeva, so that he could avenge his father's death. The Lord said, "No one can kill Mahādeva because he is Īśvara, he is eternal like me, so it is impossible to kill him." Gayāsura kept insisting and pleading with the Lord to offer him a boon to kill Mahādeva. Bhagavān Śrī Hari, being pleased with his *tapasya*, was obliged to offer him a boon, so Śrī Hari blessed Gayāsura, that he would be able to defeat not only Mahādeva, but even he Śrī Hari himself. If he appeared to fight with him, then Gayāsura would be able to defeat him as well. Gayāsura was very surprised to hear this from Bhagavān. With this boon Gayāsura soon defeated Mahādeva. Then, Bhagavān stood up to fight with him, forgetting, that Gayāsura had defeated Mahādeva only from the strength of his own boon. The battle went on for a very long time. An the end, Gayāsura defeated Bhagavān. Bhagavān confessed to Gayāsura, that he had derived great pleasure from his expertise in the art of fighting. He said, "No one has given me the pleasure of enjoying *vīra-rasa* like you. I am totally satisfied. You have appeased my desire to fight in battle." Śrī Hari enjoys all kinds of different moods, and he creates situations for such pleasure.

In the *rasa-śāstras* Kṛṣṇa is defined, as a *lampata-nāyaka*. If this is true, how does the oneness of *tādātmya* arise in the minds of Kṛṣṇa and

Rādhārāṇī? How do they become one? Actually, he flirts with other *gopīs* just to create a different mood and situation. He creates a drama, like a theatrical show, to create different moods. Sometimes he may get bored with Rādhārāṇī, because she is only serving and pleasing him.<sup>35</sup> He creates a situation to annoy her just to make her fight with him. So, he goes to Candrāvalī's *kuñja* and Lalitā Devī helps by adding ghee to the fire. After a sweet fight, Kṛṣṇa will eventually bring Rādhārāṇī back into the fold of his submissive love.

Usually Viśākhā Sakhī defuses the situation by advising Kṛṣṇa in a chastising mood. She reveals Rādhārāṇī's pain in separation from him despite of her anger and advises Kṛṣṇa to go back to Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa in turn confesses his fear of Lalitā, "Lalitā *sakhī* pushed me out of the *kuñja* even before Rādhārāṇī could chastise me." He then asks Viśākhā for an idea on how to re-enter the *kuñja* to meet with Rādhārāṇī in the presence of Lalitā. Then Viśākhā comes up with a brilliant idea. She may tell him to disguise himself as a magician and entertain the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, who then take him to Rādhārāṇī for her entertainment. When she is in a bad mood, she needs entertainment, so Lalitā *sakhī* will certainly allow a magician to entertain her. Once, Viśākhā asked him to disguise himself as Śyāma Sakhī to deceive Lalitā. The time when he disguised himself as a *sannyāsī*, however, Lalitā easily recognised him and chased him with a stick.

Another time Viśākhā Sakhī told him, "This time no male disguises Kṛṣṇa! It is best you dress like a beautiful *sakhī*. Lalitā will not recognise you so easily." Then Kṛṣṇa asked her, what he should do in the guise of a *sakhī*? If Lalitā and her *sakhīs* were to ask him, why he was there, what should he say? Viśākhā then came up with another bright idea, and she told him, "You can say you are a barber's daughter and you offer the service of decorating ladies' feet. You trim and clean their nails and decorate their feet with red lac."

Many times, Kṛṣṇa took Viśākhā Sakhī's advice to surrender himself at Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet. Sometimes Viśākhā Sakhī tells him to just run and catch hold of her lotus feet and place them on his head, while apologising and pleading with her. "If you can do that, then go ahead!" Kṛṣṇa followed her instructions without any hesitation, because he likes to take shelter of Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet. The whole universe is taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa, but

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<sup>35</sup> This must be a slip of the tongue, Kṛṣṇa never gets bored with Rādhā. There is no boredom in the spiritual world.

Kṛṣṇa takes shelter of Rādhārāṇī. This is the ultimate truth: Kṛṣṇa is the controller of the whole cosmos, but is controlled by Rādhārāṇī.

So, all this cheating is only to create an opportunity for a pastime with a different taste. Otherwise, meeting Rādhārāṇī in the guise of the *magician*, a barber girl, or a *sannyāsī* would not happen. Different *līlās* have different tastes and give different pleasure. Although in the scriptures Kṛṣṇa is sometimes labelled a *lampata-nāyaka*, it is not the actual truth, as he is always running after Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa may flirt with other girls, but they are not in his heart. Only Rādhārāṇī is seated there. No one can ever take her place. He likes to create different situations and different moods just to taste different *rasas*. The *mañjarīs* with *madhura-rati* are fully equipped with all kinds of different skills to please him.

Rūpa Mañjarī knows Kṛṣṇa likes to taste all kinds of different *rasas* and can read Kṛṣṇa's mind. She is very skilled in all the twelve different *rasas*. According to the situation, Rūpa Mañjarī will direct the other *mañjarīs*. Sometimes she will fool Kṛṣṇa to make Rādhārāṇī happy. They will steal his flute or any of his other belongings, and he will start searching it on their bodies. The *mañjarīs* are more intelligent than the *sakhīs*.<sup>36</sup> They arrange all these plays to support the *līlās* of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhārāṇī or Anaṅga Mañjarī. That is why they are known for their *madīyāta*, as they are one with Rādhārāṇī's heart. They know exactly how to please her and are a great intermediate support in Yugal's playful pastime. They are capable of sprouting seeds to cultivate new *līlās*. With the *mañjarīs* help, new *līlās* sprout forth for Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. Rūpa Mañjarī is the leader in creating all these new *līlās*. She does everything and all the other *mañjarīs* follow. This is called *tad-anubhāva*; whatever she says through indication, they follow single-mindedly. They always observe Rūpa Mañjarī, and Rūpa Mañjarī observes the mood of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī. She then plans accordingly to give them new tastes in their *līlā*. It is also mentioned in Caitanya *līlā* that everything happens by the desire of Yogamāyā. She actually creates the relevant desire in the hearts of the *mañjarīs*.

In Caitanya-Caritāmṛta Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa says, "I am eternally connected to the *gopīs*. They are not the wives of others. Eternally they are my wives, but to get a different taste in this *bhauma-līlā*, they are acting as

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<sup>36</sup> This is not true. In Ujjvala-Nīlamanī (8.137) Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states that the *parama-preṣṭha sakhīs* have superior qualities to all other kinds of *gopīs*. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā (1.77), "No one can equal them or exceed them in their love for the Divine Couple."

the wives of others. Yogamāyā arranges everything in such a way that neither of us are aware of this fact.” Yogamāyā covers them with a veil of illusion to make the *līlās* happen. First, she develops the feelings in the hearts of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, and then they do everything.

Yogamāyā creates the suitable atmosphere, as in the Rāsa-līlā:

bhagavān api tā rātrīḥ śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ  
vīkṣya rantuṁ manaś cakre yoga-māyām upāśritāḥ

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in all opulences, yet upon seeing those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, He turned His mind toward loving affairs. To fulfill His purposes He employed His internal potency, Yogamāyā. (SB 10.29.1)

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said to Parīkṣit Mahārāja, that Yogamāyā nicely decorated the whole of Vṛndāvana in such a way that it attracted Kṛṣṇa’s mind. He is Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān, the one who attracts all the living and even non-living entities in the whole universe, but today by the magic spell of Yogamāyā, she has attracted his mind to the beauty of Vṛndāvana. He was amazed upon seeing the beauty of the night, and it stirred his feelings, reminding him of his promise to meet with the *vraja-gopīs*.

The atmosphere is created by Yogamāyā, but the drama and all the stories are performed by the *mañjarīs* in the *anugāṭya* of Rūpa Mañjarī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. This is the special quality of Rūpa Mañjarī.

Rāmāī Ṭhākura continues with the description of another one of the five important *mañjarīs*, Śrī Rati Mañjarī. The *mañjarīs*’ names indicate their nature, character and qualities. Rūpa means beautiful, and she is not only beautiful physically. She is beautiful in every respect. The main service she performs with her own group of *sakhīs*<sup>37</sup> in the *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā* is *tāmbūla* and *cāmara-sevā*; offering betel leaves and fanning the Divine Couple.

Now Rāmāī Ṭhākura describes the qualities of Rati Mañjarī. ‘Rati’ means very deep attachment.

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<sup>37</sup> When Rūpa and Rati Mañjarī are with Rādhārāṇī, they have no *yūtha* (group of *sakhīs*) of their own. It is only when they are with Anaṅga Mañjarī in a different *prakāśa* that they have a *yūtha* like this.

## Rati Mañjarī

tāmbūla cāmara seve, aṣṭa koṇe sthiti sabhe,  
 ebe kōhi śrī rati mañjarī  
 śrī rādhikā priyatamā, snehe keho nahe samā,  
 rādhā saṅge satata vihāra (19)

“Rūpa Mañjarī’s service in the *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā* is to offer *tāmbūla* and perform *cāmara-sevā*. Now I will speak of Śrī Rati Mañjarī. She is Śrī Rādhikā’s most beloved, and no one is equal to her; that is how affectionate Rādhārāṇī is towards her. She is the constant companion of Rādhā.”

sthira vidyut sama kānti, nīlāmbara śobhe tati,  
 caturdaśa varṣa kori sīmā  
 śabdavatī (suddharatī), rasakalā, ramanī carasalā,  
 līlāvatī guṇavatī imā (20)

“She has a lustre like that of a steady lightning strike and is beautified by a blue garment. She is under 14 years old. Her *sakhīs* are Śabdavatī (Suddharatī), Rasakalā, Ramanī. Carasalā. Līlāvatī and Guṇavatī.”

Commentary:

*Śrī rādhikā priyatamā, snehe keho nahe samā*, Rati Mañjarī is very dear to Rādhārāṇī. The love that Rādhārāṇī has for her is very special and incomparable to the love she has for other *mañjarīs*. Rati Mañjarī is also about fourteen years old, the same age as Rūpa Mañjarī. She is mature and yet, has a very childlike simple nature similar to Rādhārāṇī. Whenever Rādhārāṇī feels like playing with her pets – her swan, baby deer or her parrot – Rati Mañjarī will always be there accompanying her.

She is also very expert in *śabda-kalā*, that is music, dance and singing. Whenever Rādhārāṇī wants to enjoy any kind of music, she requests Rati Mañjarī to sing. Rati Mañjarī sings very sweet melodies for Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa according to the time, place and their mood. If Rādhārāṇī is feeling separation, to give her solace Rati Mañjarī plays music in a particular melody and *rāga* which diverts her mind, relieving the pain of separation. Through her music and singing, Rādhārāṇī starts to feel that Kṛṣṇa is not too far from her and he will be coming soon. This is why; Rādhārāṇī loves her more than anyone else. She is also *tarala-svabhāva*, which means ‘one who is not

serious,' but for Rati Mañjarī the meaning of the word cannot be taken literally. In her case it means she is very childlike at times.

All the *mañjarīs* are very serious in their service. They never forget anything and are focused in their dedication to their Svāminī, Śrī Rādhē. When Rādhārāṇī is in a playful mood, they also act like children to enhance her mood. Sometimes, when Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa play *kanduka* (ball), the *mañjarīs* make the *kanduka* with a creeper or a garland and play with Rādhārāṇī. If Rādhārāṇī were to say that I would like to play ball, the *mañjarīs* immediately follow her mood even if they were in a serious mood. The minute Rādhārāṇī expresses her desire to do something, the *mañjarīs*' mood changes accordingly, be it to play with her deer, swan, parrot or a ball. To entertain Rādhārāṇī in all her playful moods, Rati Mañjarī is the best. All the *mañjarīs* are very well acquainted with their service. They do not need any instructions from the *sakhīs* or group leaders.

The junior or *sādhaka-mañjarīs* who are newly engaged, are usually examined by Rūpa Mañjarī first. After she is convinced that the new *sādhaka-mañjarī* does not have any independent love for Kṛṣṇa and is fully expert in all services, she sends her to Anaṅga Mañjarī for final examination. Once Anaṅga Mañjarī is satisfied, the new *sādhaka-mañjarī* is sent to serve Yūgala.

All the *mañjarīs* have a dedicated service mood and the talent to perform their service without any further instructions from the leaders. Performing their service flawlessly is not the most important qualification of the *mañjarīs*. First and foremost, they should not have any separate interest in Kṛṣṇa. They cannot serve in the very confidential *nikuñja-kutīra* pastimes, if they have a personal desire to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the senior *mañjarīs* are very cautious when considering the eligibility of the junior *mañjarīs* for entrance into *nikuñja-kutīra-sevā*.

The *aṣṭa-mañjarīs* are the leaders of the eight main groups of all the *mañjarīs*. Among them, the two principle leaders are Anaṅga and Rūpa. The *aṣṭa-mañjarīs* have their own groups and their own *kuñjas*.<sup>38</sup> The *sakhīs* also have their own *kuñjas*. Sometimes a group-leader *sakhī* or *mañjarī* may invite Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to her *kuñja*. In this case, all the other *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* go to that *kuñja* to perform their service. Sometimes it may be in Anaṅga Mañjarī's *kuñja*, Rūpa Mañjarī's *kuñja*, Rati Mañjarī's *kuñja* or

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<sup>38</sup> The *aṣṭa-mañjarīs* are not *yūtheśvarīs* and do not have their own *yūtha* when serving Rādhārāṇī; they only have a *yūtha* when serving Anaṅga Mañjarī. These are two different *prakāśas*.



Guna Mañjarī's *kuñja*. In any one of the *kuñjas*, not only the group members of that *kuñja*, but all the other *mañjarīs* may serve them with their different service talents.

*Sthira vidyut sama kānti, nīlāmbara śobhe tati*, her body complexion is like lightning. Lightning flashes in the blink of an eye, but if we freeze lightning, that will be the bodily complexion of Rati Mañjarī. She likes to be dressed in royal blue, because she is a very dear intimate friend of Rādhārāṇī. Whichever way Rādhārāṇī dresses. Rati Mañjarī also dresses similarly. Rāmāi Ṭhākura mentioned *nīlāmbara śobhe tati*, she is dressed in royal blue, but that does not mean that she is always dressed in this colour. This is the colour Rāmāi Ṭhākura saw her wearing in his meditation. He saw her dressed in royal blue, so he mentions this as her dress colour. Kṛṣṇa's favourite colour is *pīta-varṇa*, yellow. He likes to wear a yellow *dhoti* and *cāddar*. Blue and yellow is a very pleasant combination. Kṛṣṇa's complexion is dark blue, and Rādhārāṇī's complexion is golden, while Kṛṣṇa's clothes are yellow and Rādhārāṇī's are dark blue. So, they are totally matching and complimentary even in their dress colour and body complexion.

In the Gutika it is mentioned that when we are given *siddha-praṇālī*, our dress colours are mentioned. At the end of Gutika again it is stated that what is given in our *siddha-praṇālī* is not a fixed permanent colour. It can change according to necessity. In the *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā-smaraṇa*, the eightfold pastimes mentioned in the Gutika of Siddha Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī, the *līlās* will change and dresses will also change. Whatever he has described in his Gutika is only his meditation on one day. Some *līlās* are daily pastimes, like the *go-carāṇa-līlā*. Kṛṣṇa goes with his friends daily to take the cows out grazing. Other *līlās* occur only during festive seasons, like the Holi-līlā, which takes place during the Vasanta-season (Spring). During this time, Kṛṣṇa does not go to the forest with the cows. He enjoys the Holi festival with his friends and devotees. At that time, they celebrate Vasanta-ṛtu (spring season) for fifteen days.

Some *līlās* are fixed, like Rādhārāṇī's daily worship of Surya Deva, the sun-god. Some *līlās* change. It is mentioned in *līlā-paryāya* that there are two kinds of *līlās*: *nitya-līlā* (eternal *līlā*) and *naimitika-līlā*, occasional *līlā*. In *abhisāra-līlā*, sometimes Rādhārāṇī will begin her *abhisāra* from Varṣāṇā, from her father's house, and sometimes from Yāvaṭa, her in-laws' house. What is mentioned is only a single day's pastimes, and it can change according to our *sādhana-bhajana*. We will see changes in the *līlās*, as they are not fixed.

In the end, Rāmāi Ṭhākura sums up by saying, that Rati Mañjarī is not only expert in enhancing Rādhārāṇī's childlike play pastimes and music, but she is skilfully serving in all the other pastimes as well. She is *līlāvatī-guṇavatī*. When Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī meet, they don't only spend their time with each other. Sometimes they play with all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*, and sometimes they spend time in *saṅgīta-kala* (singing). Sometimes Rādhārāṇī may ask the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* to dance. Apart from the intimate pastimes, they also enjoy other *līlās* in different ways. Whenever they arrange picnics, they request Rādhārāṇī to cook. They will say, "Hey Rādhē! Today we want to enjoy your cooking."

There is a story about a young boy, who came from Bengal to Vṛndāvana to meet Kṛṣṇa. This boy later became a *siddha-mahātma*. When he heard the narrations about Kṛṣṇa and his pastimes, he got very attracted to him. He had heard that Kṛṣṇa was about fifteen-years old and loved to play with his friends, and that he loved the cows and all the animals in the forest and they also loved him. This fascinated the mind of the young boy, and he soon left home for Vṛndāvana, hoping to meet Kṛṣṇa. Soon after reaching Vṛndāvana, he met his guru and surrendered to him. In his intense eagerness to meet Kṛṣṇa, he was pining away. Finally, one day with the blessings of his guru, Kṛṣṇa appeared to him in the forest, where he was herding the guru's cows, and he fulfilled all his desire to play with Kṛṣṇa as one of his *sakhās*. On another day, Kṛṣṇa arranged a very special picnic and asked the boy to bring for all the items needed for the feast. Kṛṣṇa invited Rādhārāṇī to do the cooking with her *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*. This scene was witnessed by the guru of the young boy. It is a true story that took place in Vṛndāvana and is mentioned in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Jīvanī in detail.

Whenever Kṛṣṇa wants to enjoy any kind of picnic, he always invites Rādhārāṇī to come and join, and she usually does the cooking. Before Kṛṣṇa arrives for the intimate pastimes, Rādhārāṇī and her *sakhīs* wait for him in great *ānanda*. After he arrives, Rādhārāṇī starts feeling pangs of separation even while she is with him. One day the *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs* seated the divine couple on the swing, and Kṛṣṇa gestured to the *mañjarīs* to start pushing the swing very swiftly. His intention was to make Rādhārāṇī embrace him out of fear. Rādhārāṇī embraced him, placing her face on his chest. Kṛṣṇa's face was just above Rādhārāṇī's face. To see each other, they would look at the reflection in their ornaments. While Rādhārāṇī was resting on his chest, Kṛṣṇa would look at the reflection of her face on his armlet. From his armlet Kṛṣṇa took the *darśan* of her face from his direction, and Rādhārāṇī would take his *darśan* on his armlet from her direction. In this way they enjoyed

bliss in each other's company by embracing each other firmly and gazing at each other. However, when the *mañjarīs* pushed the swing even harder, the reflection on the mirror-like armlet disappeared. Since they were both so absorbed in each other, losing *darśan* of each other on the armlet made them feel separation, and they both started crying while in each other's embrace. At that moment, absorbed in their mood of separation, they were oblivious to their surroundings, even the presence of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*.

When they are together, Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa drink the nectar of each other's moonlike faces. They can drink the sweetness of fruits from each other's faces. They can smell the fragrance of flowers and can enjoy the beauty of the lotus from each other's eyes. They can fully satisfy each other just by looking at each other.

As soon as they are caught in the mood of separation, Rati Mañjarī steps in to take up her role. Her name itself indicates that she is very attached to Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa. Only when one is very attached to someone can they read the mind and heart of whoever they are attached to. All the other *mañjarīs* can also read their emotions, but only one who is very attached can read, sense and feel every single emotion. At that time Rati Mañjarī stays very close to them and manages everything.

The feeling of separation during a meeting is the most amazing special mood mentioned in *rasa-śāstras*. Before meeting they are in bliss, just thinking of Kṛṣṇa's arrival. But when Kṛṣṇa arrives, a feeling of separation begins. Waiting for union with the beloved is very blissful, but while in union the thought of being separated again is very painful. The *gopīs* say, "We can wait for Kṛṣṇa all our life, but the pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa is unbearable." There is something very astonishing, strange and amazing about separation in meeting. The mood and feelings of pain are very intense. We cannot realize this feeling with our practice of *bhakti-sādhana*. There are so many different kinds of emotions in the meeting of love. Different kinds of emotions are felt at different times of the meeting.

The last part of an intimate meeting is followed by *prema-anurarana*. *Anurarana* means reverberations. For example, if we ring a bell or hit a metal bell with a metal stick just once, the sound will continue to resonate for some time. This sound that carries on is known as *anurarana*. In the meeting of love there is also this *anurarana*. After enjoying the bliss of meeting with Kṛṣṇa, after he leaves, the *gopīs* love to keep this *rasodgāra*, reminiscing about the pastime, flowing like a resonation in their hearts.

We find this *rasodgāra* in a *niśānta-līlā kirtana*. Rādhārāṇī continues talking about Kṛṣṇa and their meeting of the previous night. They

are discussing how nice the meeting with Kṛṣṇa was. How he came, what he said and did. Rādhārāṇī is holding on to this *rasodgāra* of their meeting to keep herself alive during separation. When the *rasodgāra* stops, the pain of separation re-appears, and she starts crying for Kṛṣṇa. This is the time, when Rati Mañjarī becomes active, and her role is most needed. She has the ability to prolong the *rasodgāra*, reminiscing about their meeting, by her expertise. She can bring those memories to life again. She reminds Rādhārāṇī how Kṛṣṇa's embrace was very special the previous night; it was not like any other day. Then, she refreshes Rādhārāṇī's memory of the time when, with one hand Kṛṣṇa was embracing her and she will make Rādhārāṇī recollect what he was doing with his other hand. In this way she prolongs the *rasodgāra* and relieves Rādhārāṇī from the pain of separation.

She is so attached to her service to the divine couple's pastimes, that she remembers every detail of what had happened, like a movie playing in her mind. For this reason, she is able to continue the *rasodgāra*, replaying the whole scene of the pastime, so that Rādhārāṇī can immerse herself in reminiscing about the pastime she had with Kṛṣṇa and forget her pain of separation. There are two types of *rasodgāra*. One is *purva-rasodgāra*, which happens before the meeting; that is, Rādhārāṇī imagines, what Kṛṣṇa will do before the meeting actually occurs. The other is *uttara-rasodgāra*, remembrance of the pastimes after the meeting, in separation.

nṛtya gīta rasollāsa, vīṇā vādyā mṛdu hāsa,  
aṣṭa koṇa vāmabhāge sthiti  
kṛṣṇa preme sadā magnā, saundarya lāvaṇya sīmā  
kṛṣṇa-prīte sevā kore niti (21)

“Rati Mañjarī and her *sakhīs* are great dancers and singers. They play the *vīṇā* with smiles on their faces. They are situated on the left side of the divine couple within the octagonal-shaped Yogapīṭha. They are always immersed in love for Kṛṣṇa. Their beauty and elegance are unlimited, and they nicely serve Kṛṣṇa with great love.”

### Commentary:

Rādhā and Govinda have special love for Rati Mañjarī because she knows how to develop the mood of *rasollasa* through her expertise in singing, dancing and playing musical instruments, especially the *vīṇā*. *Rasa-ullasa* means the heights of intense pleasure. Rati Mañjarī has the skill of increasing pleasure to an even higher intensity. In the stage of *rasollasa*

different kinds of ecstatic feelings manifest in the hearts of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and the *sakhīs*. At that stage, submerged in an ecstatic trance, concept of the bodily identities of male or female are forgotten and in a spellbound trance they mingle with each other on the same platform. They are immersed in each other by their *bhāvas*. This stage is known as *rasaollasa*. Rati Mañjarī is expert in creating this ecstatic mood of *rasollasa*, and she knows how to plan the game according to time, place and circumstances. She is expert in creating any pastime, according to Rādhārāṇī's mood.

She is always immersed in *kṛṣṇa-prema*, *kṛṣṇa-prīte sevā kore niti*. With her full attention she is always serving Kṛṣṇa with her deep love for him. So far, we have heard that if any *mañjarī* has separate love for Kṛṣṇa, they will be refused entrance into the *nikuñja-sevā* by Anaṅga and Rūpa Mañjarī. So, what does this *kṛṣṇa preme sadā magnā* mean?

Rāmāi Ṭhākura explains that this is not independent love which she has for Kṛṣṇa. She knows the heart of Kṛṣṇa by her deep love for him and therefore she is able to understand Kṛṣṇa's and Rādhārāṇī's desire. She is able to create the right atmosphere for their pastimes. All the other *mañjarīs* follow the desire and order of Rādhārāṇī to please Kṛṣṇa. But Rati Mañjarī is *kṛṣṇa-prīte sevā kore niti*, she is always trying to please Kṛṣṇa and is always immersed in *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Does this mean she is more attached to Kṛṣṇa than Rādhārāṇī? Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, that she is the closest and most intimate friend of Rādhārāṇī, and Rādhārāṇī loves her more than anyone. So how is this possible? The answer is that this attachment of hers to Kṛṣṇa is also for pleasing Rādhārāṇī. For example, when we love someone very deeply, it is a natural tendency for us to search out those who have deep respect and affection for our beloved. We try to develop a friendship with such persons.

Here in this world, when we need to meet a dignitary to present a gift, we will not approach that person directly. Instead, we approach someone who is close to that dignitary, such as his children or family members with whom he is very close, or his secretary who is constantly in touch with him. We will try to approach them and please them, and through them we may get a chance to fulfil our aim. Similarly, we can only approach the Divine Couple through their intimate associates.

In Vraja, love for Kṛṣṇa is not only in *madhura-rati*. Everyone in Vraja, especially Kṛṣṇa's close associates and their entire family life is centred on Kṛṣṇa. The mothers love their sons because they know Kṛṣṇa loves them so much, and their son is an intimate friend of Kṛṣṇa. She takes care of her son very nicely so that Kṛṣṇa will be happy with her son. Why

does the son love his mother so much? Because he knows his mother has very deep attachment and love for Kṛṣṇa. So, for everyone, Kṛṣṇa is their medium of love, and their loving relationship with everyone is cantered on Kṛṣṇa.

This is why Rādhārāṇī loves Rati Mañjarī the most. Rati is always trying to please Kṛṣṇa. For this reason, Rati Mañjarī can please Rādhārāṇī very easily. If Rādhārāṇī needs anything, she will request Rati Mañjarī, who is always next to her on her left side in the Yogapīṭha.

Sometimes, whenever Kṛṣṇa pokes fun or jokes with Rādhārāṇī and she has no words to reply, Rati Mañjarī will help Rādhārāṇī. By whispering into her ear, she tells her what to say in reply to Kṛṣṇa's mischievous jokes and pranks. Whenever Rādhārāṇī needs something, she reaches out for Rati Mañjarī, who is always standing on her left side. Without being told anything Rati guesses what Rādhārāṇī needs. To be able to serve Rādhārāṇī effectively, one needs to fully understand Kṛṣṇa's heart. For example, if doctors do not know the anatomy of a patient, they cannot treat the patients properly. Whenever Rādhārāṇī wants to trick Kṛṣṇa or to joke with him, Rati Mañjarī is present as an advisor to her Svāmīnī. This is the specialty of Rati Mañjarī.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has given a brief description of her qualities. The rest has to come from our *bhajana*. All of the *mañjarīs* have countless special qualities, and it is not possible to describe them all. It will all appear in our *līlā-smaraṇa*, if we practise seriously. If we want to know more about them, we have to perform our *bhajana* in *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā-smaraṇa* to realize it. Whatever Rāmāi Ṭhākura is explaining is like a guide to our *bhajana* practice. We should always keep it in our heart and remember it. If we forget, than everything is useless. This *bhajana* is very confidential and we should keep it like a secret locked in our heart. We should not discuss this openly, as it will spoil the *rasa*.

Next, Rāmāi Ṭhākura describes the qualities of Rasa Mañjarī,

aṣṭa koṇa dakṣiṇe sṭhiti, praphulla campaka kānti,  
pīnonnata payodhara ābhā  
cāṣa pakṣāmbārā dhanī, caturdaśa varṣa tanī,  
preyaśī veṣṭita ati śobhā (22)

“Rasa Mañjarī, with her *sakhīs* are positioned on the right-hand side of the divine couple in the octagonal-shaped Yogapīṭha. Her complexion is a lustre

of blossoming *campaka* flowers. Her body glows, like a dense cloud in the sky, and her dress is pale coloured, like a *casa* bird. She is a fourteen-year-old adolescent and always surrounded by her own *sakhīs*.”

raseśvarī vidyāvātī, raṅgamālā rasonnatī,  
rasamukhyā rasabhadrā imā  
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, rādhā prema magna raṅge,  
nānā ābharaṇa manoramā (23)

“Accompanying Śrī Rasa Mañjarī are Raseśvarī, Vidyāvātī, Raṅgamālā Rasonnatī, Rasamukhyā and Rasabhadrā. They look strikingly enchanting, adorned with various ornaments, and are all immersed in their love for Śrī Rādhā.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura describes Rasa Mañjarī as *rasīke* (F), one who is most expert in *rasa*. She is the leader of all *rasika-mañjarīs*, who specialise in the most important *rasika-sevā*, the *sevā* rendered when the Divine Couple are relishing pastimes in the *nikuñja*.

She is a great scholar, well versed in the subject of service. Just to know how to provide certain services like offering *ārati*, *bala-bhoga* and *rāja-bhoga* to the Lord is not actual service. Service must be done from the heart. Before we begin any kind of service to Rādhā-Govinda, we have to first meditate on the service. Before dressing them, we have to see which lunar day it is and choose the colours accordingly. In *smṛti-śāstra* it is mentioned that before we perform any service, we first have to offer *mānasi-pūjā* (mentally conceived *pūjā*):

svāgatam deva deveśa svāgatam madhusūdana |  
grhāṇa mānasīm pūjām māyāhīnam yadarpitam ||

“Hey Kṛṣṇa! Hey Deva Deveśa! I wish to serve you. First, I am mentally preparing to offer this to you. Please make it very pure. If there is any fault in my *sevā*, please make me realize it.” (Ādi Śankara, Viṣṇu Manasi Pūjā)

Why do we have to offer this *mānasi-pūjā*? It is to offer the service from the heart with purity. To offer dresses to the Lord is not very difficult. The tailor will make the dress according to the measurement, and after that we just dress the Lord. This is very simple.

But if we do not first contemplate on how to offer it, our *sevā* will not be very pleasing to the deity. We have to meditate on which style we should place the dress and the matching ornaments, how the garlands should be hung so that it looks like it is swaying on the deity – if we do not prepare ourselves mentally – then we will not be sure what to do and we will keep changing the ornaments and delay the service; everything will go wrong. We will not be satisfied and neither will the deities be pleased. We should first meditate on dressing them in our heart and then do it externally.

After offering the outfits or any other service, the *rasika-premi-bhaktas* will look at the face of the deity to see if they are happy, if they are smiling or not. This is not just imagination; it is a true fact. This is the reason why after dressing deities, we offer them a mirror and ask them, “Are you happy? Please reveal to me if you are not.” This is part of the proper practice in deity dressing. The *rasika-bhaktas* can see their happy expression by their smile.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the sweet pastimes of *rasika-premi-bhaktas*, like Śrutadeva and Bahulāśva. These *premi-bhaktas* were supposed to go and take *darśan* of Kṛṣṇa directly in Dwārakā. Every time they were supposed to leave, they kept procrastinating because of their attachment to their worship of Kṛṣṇa in the deity form. They could not leave without satisfying their deities first. Śrutadeva dressed his deity, and after he offered the mirror, he felt that they were not happy with his dressing. He dressed them again and again three to four times until he finally saw the smiling face of his deities, and then he was satisfied.

*Rasika-bhaktas* first meditate and complete their service in *mānasi-pūjā*, then they start their service externally, and then they wait to see if the deities are satisfied or not. All service that we offer to the deities must be like an art. After we have offered food, we have to go out of the deity room, and when we re-enter, we must clap our hands three times. There is an art of clapping. First, we tap softly, then a little louder and then even louder. We must not be aggressive. Our movement and gesture must be very gentle. When they are taking *bhoga* we should not enter in a rude manner. At night, we should not ring the bell very loudly when we are putting them to rest. They are feeling drowsy with sleep and if we ring the bell very loudly, they will get disturbed.

We have to serve according to their mood for their pleasure and satisfaction. That is why we have to contemplate the service mentally before we serve. We are not scholars, like Rasa Mañjarī. She is a great scholar and expert in rendering service. She knows the art of performing all kinds of



services for Rādhā-Govinda. All of us are serving deities, so we need to know and follow the art of worshipping deities. Some worship Gopala, some worship Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, and others worship Rādhā-Govinda. Whatever service we perform, it must be done in an artistic way. When we offer *bhoga*, we must decorate the offering plate in a presentable way. We must remember that Kṛṣṇa is *rasikendra-cūdāmaṇi* (the crown-jewel of relishers). Whenever we offer anything to him, we must decorate the offering and use some fragrance with the offering. While we are honouring *prasādam*, if there is any bad odour, we will be disturbed and will not be able to relish the *prasādam*. So, to create a pleasant environment when we offer food to Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, we must light some nice fragrance to create a pleasant atmosphere that will be pleasing to them when they are taking *bhoga* that we have offered. We have to know this art of offering, and it only comes with dedication and devotion. In Veṇu Gītā, the *vraja-gopīs* mentioned how even the animals are worshipping Kṛṣṇa with devotion in their own way.

My father, Prabhupād Madangopal Gosvāmī, composed this *rasika* song, which illustrates the art of internal worship through our lotus-like heart.

*ki kaj chandone jodi prem thake mone,  
śurobito hobe o go hridayo kamale*

“What use is there for candan paste to offer flowers, if you have prema in the heart? All you have to do is smear that prema, like *candana* on the lotus flower of your heart and offer it with devotion.”

*bhakti phol upachare sevā kore kai mone,  
rati moti tulasī dao tahari upore*

“What satisfaction is there in offering the Lord fruits from the trees? All you need is to place a Tulasī leaf on the fruits of bhakti in your heart and offer it to the Lord.”

*utkanta dhup jele surobato koro ghore,  
ogo suganthi atur anurag hauk*

“Ignite the intense agitation of longing for the Lord in your heart and make your home fragrant with that ever-lasting divine aroma.”

*nayono utphale pūjā koro śrī charane  
braje jemon kore chilo braje gopī gan*

“Worship the lotus feet of the Lord with your lotus like eyes by coating them with the sandal-paste of prema, just like how the *gopīs* of Vraja did.”

We have to offer our lotus heart at his lotus feet. We mix sandalwood pulp with flowers to make the flowers more fragrant and nicer for offering. If Kṛṣṇa loves lotuses and we have no lotus, how will we offer him a lotus? Every one of us has a special lotus, that is our lotus-like heart. We have to mix this lotus-like heart with the sandalwood pulp of our *anurāga* and prema and offer it at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. What Kṛṣṇa loves most is all within us. We have everything we need within us and we can use it as an offering to Kṛṣṇa without any need for external items. Unfortunately, our attention and dedication to *kṛṣṇa-sevā* is just like incense which is external and does not last long.

How do the *vraja-gopīs* offer the lotus to Kṛṣṇa:

gopīnām nayanotpalārcita-tanūm  
go-gopa-saṅghāvṛtaṁ  
govindam kala-veṇu-vādana-param  
divyāṅga-bhūṣaṁ bhaje

“I worship Lord Govinda, whose complexion is the color of a blooming blue lotus flower, whose face is like the moon, who is fond of wearing a peacock feather crown, who bears the mark of Śrīvātsa, who wears a great Kaustubha gem, who is dressed in yellow garments, whose handsome form is worshiped with the lotus-like glances of the *gopīs*, who is accompanied by a host of Surabhi cows and *gopas*, who is fond of sweetly playing the flute, and whose transcendental body is decorated with glittering ornaments.” (Śrī Śāradākāra, Padyāvali 46)

It is mentioned in the Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dhyana-mantra that the *gopīs* do not have to offer any external items for their worship to Kṛṣṇa, *nayanotpalārcita-tanum*, they offer their lotus-like eyes at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. We have to offer everything by decorating it with our love. If there is no love and attachment, Kṛṣṇa will not even glance in that direction. We can offer *rāja-bhoga* or very expensive dresses and ornaments, but nothing will impress him.

nānopacāra-kṛta-pūjanam āta-bandhoḥ  
premaiva bhakta-hṛdayam sukha-vidrutam syāt

yāvat kṣud asti jaṭhare jaraṭhā pipāsā  
tāvat sukhāya bhavato nanu bhakṣya-peye

“As long as there is hunger and thirst within the stomach, varieties of food and drink make one feel very happy. Similarly, when the Lord is worshiped with pure love, the various activities performed in the course of that worship make the heart of the devotee melt in transcendental bliss.” (Padyāvali 13/CC Madhya 8.69)

We cannot attract Kṛṣṇa’s mind with *upacāras*, items offered in worship. He is not interested in *upacāras*; he is looking for the love, which is present there. Even if the simplest item is offered with love, he will immediately accept it, but if we offer the most opulent *rāja-bhoga* without love, and if there is any trace of ego of showing off to everyone that we are worshipping Kṛṣṇa in such an opulent way, Kṛṣṇa will just flee from there. His deity form may be there, but Kṛṣṇa will not be present there. Where there is ego, there is no Kṛṣṇa. We have to remove all false ego. Even a small drop of ego should not remain.

We have to remember what happened to the *vraja-vadhū*s in the *rāsa-līlā*. It was not really ego; they just thought that they were the most fortunate in the whole universe, and that is why they had been chosen by Kṛṣṇa. Although that was true, to Kṛṣṇa that was also ego, and he left the Rāsa-sthalī. Rādhārāṇī was feeling she is the best of all the other *gopīs*. Although that too is true, which is why Kṛṣṇa took her away from everyone to a secluded place. For Kṛṣṇa that was also a kind of ego and he left her and disappeared.<sup>39</sup> If this can happen to the *vraja-vadhū*s and Rādhārāṇī, then what will our situation be? Where are we compared to them?

What is mentioned in the scriptures and described in the *līlās* is not only for reading or hearing. There are a lot of lessons to be learned. These pastimes guide us on our path of bhakti. We must be very cautious; otherwise, we will spend our whole life trying, but not get anything – not even a single drop of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Rasa Mañjarī is a great expert in this field of *sevā*. She knows how to perform all the services from her heart and offer them as lotus flowers to the Divine Couple. She is always with all her closest *sakhīs*, guiding and serving with them. She is also an expert in making plans for entertainment.

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<sup>39</sup> Rādhārāṇī doesn’t have ‘ego’ like this. Viśvanātha Cakravartī explains that Kṛṣṇa left Rādhā in order to show the other *gopīs* the superiority of her love.

She makes all the arrangements and plans for different types of entertainment before she joins the pastimes of Rādhā-Govinda. All her plans are like flowers of different colours strung into a garland representing varieties of entertainment, which she always wears around her neck. She observes the Divine Couple, and if they are not pleased with what has been presented she immediately replaces it with another form of entertainment for their pleasure. From her store of inspiration she can immediately replace one form of entertainment with another, any time, without any delay. Similarly, when they are in pleasure, she knows how to increase their pleasure to its highest limit.

Rādhārāṇī always discusses with Rasa Mañjarī any new ideas she has on how to please Kṛṣṇa. She is also among those who guide Rādhārāṇī in the Rāsa-līlā pastimes. All these main *mañjarīs* are the ones who guide Rādhārāṇī, not the *sakhīs*.<sup>40</sup> The *sakhīs* just join in the playing of the pastimes. Lalitā Sakhī's duty is to just add fuel to the fire of Rādhārāṇī's anger and Viśākhā Sakhī applies ointment in her wounds. That is their *sevā*.

During intimate service, the *mañjarīs* are there to assist Rādhārāṇī and guide her. They serve and simultaneously guide Rādhārāṇī. That is why they are very important and always remain very close to her. Rati Mañjarī is always situated on the left and Rasa Mañjarī is on the right side of Rādhārāṇī in the Yogapīṭha. Whenever she needs something, all she has to do is to touch them. Just by feeling their Svāminī's touch, they immediately understand what she needs, and they will offer it to her. They have such a deep-rooted heart to heart bond with Rādhārāṇī.

Thus, ends the description of Rasa Mañjarī by Rāmāi Ṭhākura.

### Maṇi Mañjarī

śrī maṇi mañjarī nāma, vidhu nindi mukhadhām,  
pīnonnata payodhara tati  
trayodaśa varṣiyā, nija dāsī saṅge laiṇā,  
sevā kore kṛṣṇa preme ati (24)

“Śrī Maṇi Mañjarī's charming face defeats the splendour of the moon. She has firm and raised breasts. She is thirteen years old and with her own *dāsīs*, she serves Kṛṣṇa with great love.”

<sup>40</sup> Not true. Rādhārāṇī accepts guidance from her *sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā.

madhukaṇṭha manda hāsī, madhu mañju madhurāśī,  
 indrā kandarpikā ādi kori  
 tat sakhyas tad rūpākāra, sevā kore nirantara  
 yāra yaiche mata anusārī (25)

“She has a sweet voice and she smiles slightly. She is an abode of honey-like sweetness and loveliness. Her *sakhīs*, Indra, Kandarpika and others, are all endowed with forms and qualities similar to hers. They constantly serve her with various services according to their own moods.”

aṣṭa koṇasyāgne sthiti, kṛṣṇa sukho sukāmatī,  
 magna cittā rādhā prema lehā  
 rūpa guṇe ḍagamagi, dohe prīti anurāgī  
 khañjanākṣī manohara dehā (26)

“Maṇi Mañjarī is situated in the south eastern corner of the octagonal-shaped Yogapīṭha. She is always eager to see Kṛṣṇa happy, and in that way her heart is always absorbed in love for Śrī Rādhā. She has restless eyes, like wagtail birds, and has a beautiful charming appearance.”

### Commentary:

The first three *mañjarīs*, Rūpa, Rati and Rasa Mañjarī, are very important and very special. Śrī Maṇi Mañjarī is not in that category, but nevertheless, she too has some very special qualities and is very intimate with Śrī Rādhā and Govinda. She loves both of them equally; they are non-different for her. She is thirteen years old and is younger than the others. By nature, she is very soft. She has a very sweet and melodious voice, and when she speaks it sounds like she is singing. All the *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs* as well as Rādhā-Govinda have this quality: *gamana nartana līlā vacana sangita kala*, their walking and talking is full of melody. If we watch them walking, we will feel that they are dancing, and their speech sounds like singing. Their movements, activities and speech are all artistic; Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī are the crown jewels of all of them. That is why Kṛṣṇa is known as Rāsarāja or Naṭarāja, and sometimes, as Rasikendra Cūḍāmaṇi. Rādhārāṇī is similarly named: Rāseśvarī, Priyeśvarī or Īśvarī. She is the chief gopī and no one is equal to her. Some of the *mañjarīs* are also endowed with her qualities.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura mentions the special qualities of Maṇi Mañjarī specifically. She is more beautiful than other *mañjarīs*. Her speech, her movements, and her activities are very enchanting. That is why he is

describing her qualities separately. *Madhukaṇṭha*: her speech is like a shower of honey. *Manda hāṣī*: when she smiles, it looks like millions of *kuṇḍa* flowers are blooming with her smile. Her name is Maṇi, which means a jewel; this indicates that she is the jewel of all the *mañjarīs*, because she has the quality of spreading love in every direction, like the effulgence of a jewel. Just like Cupid, she creates the desire for meeting within the Divine Couple's heart and increases their longing for each other with her sweet words. She has the art of approaching them in such a way, as to arouse their longing to meet each other. She is like Cupid in a female form.

She is a very intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī, and she loves to be in her company. She specialises in all services and is always at the disposal of the Divine Couple, whenever either one of them needs her. She serves them both equally. With the same love for both, she follows their heart's desire when serving them.

*Aṣṭa koṇasyāgne sthiti*: she and her *sakhīs* are situated in the south eastern corner of the Yogapīṭha. *Kṛṣṇa sukho sukāmatī*, Maṇi Mañjarī is always contemplating on how to make Kṛṣṇa happier. She is quick to sense whether Kṛṣṇa is happy or unhappy just by glancing at his face. No one else can recognise Kṛṣṇa's emotions, whether he is happy or sad, as he always has a beautiful smiling face in all circumstances. We can see tears in Rādhārāṇī eyes, but not Kṛṣṇa's eyes.

In Dvāpara-līlā Kṛṣṇa never showed his tears; He displayed a heart like a stone. He kept all those tears for his incarnation in Kali-yuga as Śrīman Mahāprabhu in his *antar-daśa-līlā*. In his *antar-daśa* (internal absorption), about six years before he ended his manifest pastimes, he just cried and his tears never stopped flowing. All those tears had been stored since his Dvāpara-līlā. In Dvāpara, he hid his tears and always presented a smiling front. In Vraja, Kṛṣṇa cried for Rādhārāṇī, but in solitude. We know Rādhārāṇī and all the other *vraja-gopīs* were always cheated by him, but after he left Vṛndāvana and was in Dwārakā, he cried for them privately, never in public.

When he was in Nava Vṛndāvana, Dwārakā, he was always immersed in the thoughts of Rādhārāṇī. When he was sleeping during the night, although he was sleeping with very beautiful wives, he would start crying and call out, "Rādhe! Rādhe! Rādhe!" Hearing this, his wives asked Rohini Mātā, "Who is Rādhā? How beautiful is she? Why is Kṛṣṇa so attracted to her? Please tell us who she is. We are also very beautiful and we have many good qualities, but what is so special about her that he is always crying for her?"

They asked Rohini Mātā to tell them about Rādhārāṇī. Rohini Mātā cautioned them, “Never utter the name ‘Rādhā’ here. If Kṛṣṇa hears that name, he would run to her, leaving all of you behind. No one will be able to stop him. Only Kṛṣṇa can explain about Rādhā. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are non-different; they are two different forms of the same *tattva*. I can only say this and nothing more.”

Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī cried for each other in Dvāpara-līlā, but the difference is that no one could understand Kṛṣṇa’s emotions. He always presented a happy, smiling face. *Kṛṣṇa sukho sukāmatī*: no one except Maṇi Mañjarī can guess whether Kṛṣṇa is happy or unhappy, satisfied or unsatisfied. Her mind is always absorbed in both *kṛṣṇa-prema* and *rādhā-prema*, and can feel both their minds. She knows what to do to satisfy them both and how to pacify Rādhārāṇī, when she is in the mood of separation.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, *rūpa guṇe ḍagamagi, dohe prīti anurāgī*, her love for Rādhā and Govinda is one hundred percent equal. This is an amazing quality. How is it possible for one person to love two persons equally? If we love someone one hundred percent, then how is it possible to love another person one hundred percent? It is very normal for the *mañjarīs*, *sakhīs* and Rādhārāṇī, because they are attached to Kṛṣṇa. By the power of this prema they have the same magnificence as Kṛṣṇa.

In the scriptures it is mentioned that Kṛṣṇa’s quality is *pūrṇa*. He is always *pūrṇa*, the complete whole. He can keep distributing prema, but his prema never diminishes; it remains one hundred percent complete at all times. He is known as, *pūrṇam adah*,

om pūrṇam adah pūrṇam idam pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate  
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate

”The Supreme Being is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this phenomenal world, are perfectly equipped as complete wholes. Whatever is produced of the complete whole is also complete in itself. Because He is the complete whole, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance.” (Śrī Īsopaniṣad, Invocation)

If we take one hundred percent from him, his store will still remain one hundred percent full. The *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs* are also endowed with this power of love. Their love never diminishes. This is how Maṇi Mañjarī offers one hundred percent of her love to Kṛṣṇa and the same one hundred percent

to Rādhārāṇī. Her own heart is filled to the brim with prema. It never diminishes in her service to her beloved Rādhā-Govinda. The love that she has for Kṛṣṇa is not in the mood of ‘*kāma*’ but ‘*prema*’. There is no contamination of any self-desire. She only wants to serve Kṛṣṇa in the company of Rādhārāṇī. She only desires to serve, please and give more pleasure to Rādhārāṇī. Here, she is serving Anaṅga Mañjarī with Kṛṣṇa with the same mood and love.

### Guṇa Mañjarī

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura goes on to describe the fifth intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī, Guṇa Mañjarī. He described Vṛndā Devī and the five different *mañjarīs* according to their superiority, position and status in hierarchy: Vṛndā Devī, Rūpa, Rati, Rasa, Maṇi and Guṇa Mañjarīs.

aṣṭa koṇa pūrva bhāge, sadānanda anurāse,  
suyantrāḍhyā svara maṅgalāya  
gīyate paścama premnā, śvetāmbu raśmi rāmā  
śrī guṇa mañjarī sarvathāya (27)

“On the eastern side of the octagonal-shaped Yogapīṭha is situated the ever-blissful Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī. She is an expert in playing musical instruments and has a very mesmerizing voice. Whenever she sings in the fifth note, white rays of light emanate from her bodily effulgence which resembles a white lotus. In this way, her heart is eternally blissful.”

gorocanā aṅga varṇā, sarvānanda rasa pūrṇa,  
saṅge loiyā preyasīra gaṇa  
tat sakhyas tad rūpākāra, rūpa guṇa manohara,  
śuno ebe nāma vivaraṇa (28)

“Her complexion is gorocanā and she is always filled with Rasika-delight. She takes her beloved girlfriends, whose forms and qualities are enchanting like hers, along with her. Now hear as I describe their names.”

premadā priyasī pūrṇā, ānanda vaṁśikā ghūrṇā,  
padmā padmagandhā premeśvarī  
pārijātā susambharā, śrī rādhikā sukhotkārā,  
seve niti hoīye ājṣākārī (29)



“They are Premadā, Priyasī-pūrṇā, Ānanda-vamśikā, Padmā, Padmā-gandhā, Premeśvarī, Pārijātā and Susambharā. They all serve and give great happiness to Śrī Radhika by following her orders.”

### Commentary:

Guṇa Mañjarī is a very intimate friend of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Her complexion is gorocanā. Although she does not have any specific special quality, because of her soft nature and her talent in the different arts of music and dance, she is close to both of them and serves Rādhā-Govinda and Anaṅga-Govinda in the company of her eight close *sakhīs*. Their names are Premadā, Priyasī-pūrṇā, Ānanda-vamśikā, Padmā, Padmā-gandhā, Premeśvarī, Pārijātā and Susambharā.

All of them know how to please Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa in their intimate pastimes. *Seve niti hoiye ājṣākārī*, they faithfully follow the order of their senior *mañjarīs* and are very devoted to Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī. Here Rāmāi Ṭhākura ends the brief description of Guṇa Mañjarī.

ei pañca rāmā saṅge, nānā līlā rasa raṅge,  
pradhānatva anaṅga mañjarī  
gopī sīmantiṇī madhye, sarva śaktivarā siddhe,  
guru rūpa snigdhananda kārī (30)

“With these five beautiful girls (Rūpa, Rati, Rasa, Maṇi, and Guṇa Mañjarīs), Anaṅga Mañjarī who is the leader of all the *gopīs*, in her form as guru, gives great delight and pleasure to the divine couple.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura concludes the descriptions of Anaṅga’s intimate *mañjarī* friends by saying a little more about Anaṅga and her *sakhī* friends. Anaṅga is the most powerful and perfect of all the *gopī* leaders. She serves Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in their intimate pastimes as a *mañjarī*. When she is serving Kṛṣṇa directly in *kānta-bhāva*, she performs her different *rasika* pastimes with her five intimate *sakhīs*: Rūpa, Rati, Rasa, Maṇi and Guṇa Mañjarīs. These five *sakhīs* assist her in her pastimes with Kṛṣṇa and follow her mood, but when Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī, they serve them following the mood of Rādhārāṇī.

nija yūtha aṣṭa jana, śuno nāma vivarṇna,  
anaṅga mañjarī saṅge thāki

rasa-keli suprasaṅge, ānande sevaye range,  
rādhā preme parama kautukī (31)

“Anaṅga Mañjarī is the *yūtheśvarī* of the eight *sakhīs* who blissfully serve her in her confidential pastimes. They always stay with her and are most enthused by their love for Rādhārāṇī.”

suvadā, rasadā rambhā, kelī kandalikānanda,  
jayantī tulasī aṣṭa rāmā,  
rūpe guṇe sarva varā, hāsya lāsya mattatarā,  
vādyā gīta rasonmādi sīmā (32)

“The names of her eight *sakhīs* are Suvadā, Rasadā, Rambhā, Kelī, Kandalikā Ānanda, Jayanti and Tulasī (This Tulasī is not Rati Mañjarī but a *sakhī* of Anaṅga Mañjarī). They are endowed with superb forms and are complete in all qualities. They laugh, play, and dance exquisitely and there is no comparison to their talent for playing musical instruments.”

### Commentary:

They are all endowed with beautiful forms and qualities, and are very talented in all three arts of dancing, singing and playing musical instruments. If one has all these three talents, they are known to be a scholar in these triple arts. They are experts in creating *līlā-kirtans* and can create any kind of drama according to time, place and circumstances to entertain the Divine Couple with music, dance, laughter and the *rasa* of singing.

mad īśvarī pada bhāvi, nāmnā śrī lalitā devī  
tāra kṛpāya ye hoy smaraṇa  
dṛṣā vṛndāvana dāsa, tāra pāda-padma aśa  
dhūli koroṇ mastaka bhūṣaṇa (33)

“Thinking of my mistress named Śrī Lalitā Devī and remembering her mercy, I bow my head at the lotus feet of Vṛndāvana (Candra) Dāsa, adorning my head with their dust.”

### Commentary:

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura ends this chapter by taking shelter of his *iṣṭadeva* and Yūtheśvarī. With a humble prayer to his Yūtheśvarī, he says, “What I have described in this book is only by her *kṛpā*. By her causeless

mercy I have described everything as it appeared in my heart. I am only her instrument. Everything manifested in my heart by Lalitā Devī's grace."

"By taking the dust from the lotus feet of Ṭhākura Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, I offer my respects and *praṇāms* to him. The dust from his lotus feet is the crown and ornament of my head. I am meditating upon them, as only by their blessings and mercy can I see, feel and realize these pastimes in my heart. I am not trying to see or feel anything on my own."

Thus ends the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputīkā, Yūtha Vivaraṇa.

Q: When Candrāvalī and the other rival *gopīs* lure Kṛṣṇa to them, is he going to them by mistake or intentionally going to them?

A: It is not by mistake. He falls for their tricks and goes to them. But the truth is that whatever desires the rival *sakhīs* like Candrāvalī have, corresponds to the desires Kṛṣṇa has in his heart. For that reason, they are able to make Kṛṣṇa fall into their trap. Otherwise, nobody can trick him. It is his desire that manifests in their hearts.

Q: I heard that the *mañjarīs* are not part of Rāsa-līlā, so in Goloka what will the *mañjarīs* 'sevā be?

A: Mañjarīs are also part of Rāsa-līlā. There are two kinds of Rāsa-līlā. One is *nṛtya-rasa*, where all the *gopīs* are dancing with Kṛṣṇa, and the other is *nikuñja-vilāsa*. When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enter their secret *nikuñja* pastimes, the *mañjarīs* enter there to serve.

Q: You said that in Goloka only Rāsa-līlā is going on and there are no other pastimes. Can you elaborate on this?

A: In Goloka, the *nitya-līlā* of the divine couple's pastimes are always in union. There is no *parakīya-bhāva* like in Bhauma Vṛndāvana.<sup>41</sup> Although, Rādhārāṇī is always in union with Kṛṣṇa there, this should not be mistaken as the *svakīya-bhāva* of the wedded queens of Kṛṣṇa in Dwārakā, although they are similar in mood. The pastimes there are limited. Therefore, he manifests in Bhauma Vṛndāvana to relish in full the extra four qualities that he possesses; his sweet *līlās* that are innumerable, where his beloveds are countless, his *rūpa mādhyura* and *veṇu mādhyura*.

Q: My Gurudeva, Śrīla Ananta Dāsa Bābājī, says that the Vrajavāsīs come here to relish *līlā*, because in Goloka Vṛndāvana the pastimes are all in *aiśvarya-bhāva* and here in the *nārā-vat-līlā* (human-like pastimes), the *mādhyura-rasa* is much sweeter. Can you explain the difference between the *aiśvarya-bhāva* of Vaikuṇṭha and Goloka Vṛndāvana?

A: In Goloka Vṛndāvana the *nitya-līlās* are of *aiśvarya-bhāva*, that is why Kṛṣṇa comes here to enjoy the *parakīya-bhāva*. *Parakīya-bhāva* is only here in Vraja, Bhauma Vṛndāvana. There is a difference between the *aiśvarya* of Kṛṣṇa in Goloka and the *aiśvarya* of Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha. In Goloka there are cows, mother Yaśodā and Nanda Baba. They are *nitya parikaras*, eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa. They will always be there with him.

<sup>41</sup> This is Jīva Gosvāmī's conception. According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura *parakīya-bhāva* is there in both Bhauma Vṛndāvana and Goloka Vṛndāvana.

There, Kṛṣṇa does not go to the forest for cow grazing. Yaśodā Mā will be there taking care of Kṛṣṇa. His friends will also be there but their mood will be different, as it is not like the *parakīya-līlās* in Bhauma Vṛndāvana. In Goloka too there is *mādhurya*; Kṛṣṇa is not a king there but a cowherd boy. The difference is that most the pastimes there are in union, not in separation.

Q: I remember in Gauḍīya Maṭha, Nārāyaṇa Maharaja also said that in Goloka Vṛndāvana, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are always in union, and if they are in separation, it is only brief. He said that since the separation in Goloka is only for a moment, the husbands of the *gopīs* in Goloka are just like dummies. The *gopīs* never think about them, as they are busy with Kṛṣṇa most of the time.

A: Yes, separation is experienced, but only for a very short period of time in Goloka Vṛndāvana. If there is no separation, love cannot be experienced. Only through separation, love can be relished deeply. Separation increases love. After Kṛṣṇa tasted love in separation in Goloka, he desired to come here to relish that love more deeply. He did not come here to kill demons. That was not his priority. Even if it is for a short moment, that separation is like many *yugas* for them. In Bhauma *vṛndāvana-līlā*, when the *gopīs* were swinging very fast during the swing pastimes, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa embraced each other tightly. Rādhārāṇī's head rested on Kṛṣṇa's chest. As they were not able to see each other directly face to face, they were seeing each other's *darśan* through the reflection on Kṛṣṇa's armlet. When the *gopīs* started swinging even faster, the swing started to jerk and the reflection on the armlet disappeared just for a second. By not seeing each other even for a moment, they started feeling intense separation from each other and started crying.

Q: What about all the associates in Goloka, if they want to taste *mādhurya* in *parakīya-bhāva*, do they have to come here to Bhauma Vṛndāvana?

A: I have found it mentioned in many scriptures, that pure devotees come back again and again to perform their *bhajana* in Bhauma Vṛndāvana as they are more satisfied with their *bhajana* here.<sup>42</sup>

Q: If all the pure devotees desire to come back to Bhauma Vṛndāvana after going to Goloka, then why not become pure and just stay here, in Bhauma Vṛndāvana?

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<sup>42</sup> None of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have ever said that anybody comes back to perform *bhajana* here in Bhauma Vṛndāvana. This is an obscure conception propounded by Rūpa Kavirāja and is rejected by mainstream Gauḍīya *siddhānta*.

A: It is not possible. There are rules to follow, which are set by Kṛṣṇa. When we accept this body, we have to follow or abide by the law of destruction. That means we have to come again and again in another form, another body and another mood.

Q: If the *guru-maṅjarī* will have to come again and again to save souls in Kali-yuga by the order of Rādhārāṇī, do the *maṅjarīs* follow the *guru-maṅjarī* back and forth from the spiritual place to the material place?

A: They take turns to come when they are needed.<sup>43</sup>

Q: If Anaṅga Maṅjarī is offering herself to Kṛṣṇa for pleasing Rādhārāṇī, will Rūpa Maṅjarī also do the same if she is asked to?

A: The *maṅjarīs* do not do anything independently. Everything they do is to please Rādhārāṇī. Anaṅga Maṅjarī has *kānta-bhāva*, but Rūpa *maṅjarī* would refuse, as she does not have this quality to please Kṛṣṇa. The *maṅjarīs* only have a special mood for serving, but for pleasing Kṛṣṇa there are so many different moods. Unlike the *sakhīs*, friends who may satisfy Kṛṣṇa in different moods, the *maṅjarīs* only serve and please Kṛṣṇa through Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī sometimes requests Anaṅga Maṅjarī to satisfy Kṛṣṇa like she does. This can only be done by someone who is on Rādhārāṇī's level. Anaṅga Maṅjarī is not only Rādhā's own sister; she is endowed with all the necessary qualities and has the capacity to satisfy Kṛṣṇa like Rādhārāṇī. That is why, Rūpa Maṅjarī would refuse if she is asked to do this *sevā*, as she does not have the *bhāva* to play that role. The other *maṅjarīs* know their limitations and therefore they do not desire that position.

Q: Can Kṛṣṇa be simultaneously doing the same thing in different places with different persons?

A: Only when he is in *aiśvarya-bhāva*, he can perform different activities in different places and enjoy with everyone in their respective moods at the same time. In Dwārakā, he could simultaneously do the same thing in different places, because there he is in *aiśvarya-bhāva*. He could marry sixteen thousand wives at the same time. In Vraja, only in the Rāsa-līlā was he able to expand himself as many times as he wanted, not at any other time.

Q: When Kṛṣṇa performed the Brahmā-vimohana-līlā, he manifested identical cows, calves and cowherd boys. Is it true, in that year he manifested many forms of himself and married Rādhārāṇī and all the *sakhīs*?

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<sup>43</sup> Neither the *guru maṅjarī* nor her *maṅjarī* followers come back to the material world to save the conditioned *jīvas* or to relish *bhajana* here. This is *ā-sāstric*.

A: Not according to Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. It could be in a different *kalpa*. The *līlās* are not the same in every *kalpa*. What is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is from one *kalpa*.

Q: So, if Kṛṣṇa did marry all of them in some other *kalpa*, did he have a married life with them during that one year of the Brahmā-vimohana-līlā?

A: It is unknown and it all depends on his desire.

Q: How does Kṛṣṇa satisfy all the heroines apart from Rādhārāṇī?

A: That is his power, his specialty in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. Rūpa Gosvāmī in his commentary explained why Kṛṣṇa is supreme compared to all his other avatāras. All the avatars have sixty qualities and Kṛṣṇa has sixty-four qualities. The four additional qualities that he has are *līlā-mādhurya*, *prema-mādhurya*, *veṇu-mādhurya* and *rūpa-mādhurya*. There are so many *līlās*. They are endless...and *premna premadikhyam*, he has countless beloveds. His beloveds are all those who are his *premīka-bhaktas*. Although he sometimes tricks them, that is just part of his love which has some ups and downs. He gets everything by love actually, with or without tricks.

In Rāsa-līlā, there were three hundred *crores* of *gopīs*. One *crore* is equal to ten million, but he satisfied all of them in one night. All of them were so satisfied that they said the time during that night passed like lightning. Moments which are filled with *ānanda* pass like lightning. Yet that night was the night of Brahmā. One night of Brahmā is equivalent to four thousand *yugas*. Kṛṣṇa performed the *rāsa-līlā* for four thousand *yugas* and for the *gopīs* it passed like a flash of lightning. This shows how satisfied they were. Only he has such capacity to satisfy the *vraja-gopīs* with his love.

Q: What is the extra pleasure the *mañjarīs* derive, when they see Kṛṣṇa enjoying with Rādhārāṇī?

A: They feel that Rādhārāṇī is honey and Kṛṣṇa is a bee. Sometimes Rādhārāṇī is the bee and Kṛṣṇa is the honey. When the honey and bee are together, the *mañjarīs* derive great happiness just watching the bee relish the honey from the flower. This is the reason why they are happiest when Kṛṣṇa is with Rādhārāṇī, and not when either of them are alone.





## 4<sup>th</sup> Wave – Dainya Bodhika Samprārthanā

### (Humble Supplication)

In this last chapter, the fourth wave of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā, Rāmāi Ṭhākura completes his description by glorifying the lineage of Nityānanda Prabhu and Jāhnava Mātā, whose eternal form is Anaṅga Mañjarī.

jaya jaya śrī caitanya, sannyāsī āśrama dhanya,  
vyakta koilā nyāsi rūpa dhari  
jaya jaya avadhūta, purve rohiṇīra suta,  
padmāvatī gr̥he avatari (1)

“All glories to Śrī Caitanya, who by accepting the garb of a *sannyāsī* blessed the *sannyāsa āśrama*. All glories to Avadhūta Nityānanda, who was previously the son of Rohiṇī and has now descended, as the son of Padmāvatī.”

#### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura, who was very attached to the form of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu before he took *sannyāsa*, is now very surprisingly glorifying Mahāprabhu as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya in his *sannyāsa* ashram by saying, *jaya jaya śrī caitanya, sannyāsī āśrama dhanya*. Why is he doing so? There is certainly a lesson here for all of us. If we want to adopt a new teaching and accept a new ideology, we have to first eliminate all our previous concepts and clear our heart to accept the new teaching. If our hearts are like a notebook, which has many things written in it, with or without realization, false knowledge and some true knowledge all mixed up, then there will be a mixture of all kinds of tastes: sour, sweet, spicy, salty and bitter. It is not possible to realize the purity or sweetness of any one taste in that *kitchri*, mixed-up condition.

The Mahārājas in the dynasty of Jaipur and Tripura have a very unusual way of relishing their food. They are very particular in tasting every item in its pure and original taste without mixing it with any other taste. In order to do that, after eating each item they will wash their hands and rinse their mouth to completely erase all previous taste before they taste another

item. In this way, they are able to relish the actual taste of each and every preparation. If the previous taste is in the hands or in the mouth, the next it taste will be adulterated.

In the same way, if we want to relish this very special taste of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā, it is very important for us to erase the knowledge of all other previous concepts. This special mood of Anaṅga Mañjarī is in some ways even higher than Rādhārāṇī's mood.<sup>44</sup> To be able to realize and relish the higher taste of Anaṅga Mañjarī's concept, we must completely reject and erase all other past ideologies from our mind and heart. Only then can we realize this concept without any doubt and relish it to the fullest.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura was very attached to Gaura Sundara, who had very beautiful curly hair, was dressed in fine garments and decorated with ornaments. However, he gave up his attachment to that beautiful form and focused his attention on the *sannyāsī* form of Mahāprabhu, in which he revealed the true concept of his eternal identity. He revealed all the secrets about the confidential love and pastimes of Vṛndāvana.

In his incarnation as Kṛṣṇa, he shared his prema with only those who were very near and dear to him, not with everyone,

kṛṣṇa yadi chuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā  
kabhu prema-bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

“If a devotee desires liberation or material sense gratification from Bhagavān, Kṛṣṇa immediately delivers it, but pure bhakti he keeps hidden.” (CC Adī 8.18)

He was always trying to hide his prema. In his descent as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he revealed his secret pastimes and the prema of Vṛndāvana, only after he accepted the garb of a *sannyāsi*. This is the reason why Rāmāi Ṭhākura is glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the *sannyāsi* form of the Lord.

*jaya jaya avadhūta, purve rohiṇīra suta*, he is offering his *praṇāms* to Prabhu Nityānanda, the *avadhūta-sannyāsi*. The *avadhūta* form is very special; it is higher than normal *sannyāsa*. It is a very peculiar mood: at one moment he will show attachment to everything and the next moment he will renounce everything. This is the mood of Nityānanda Prabhu; he is *avadhūta*. In his previous incarnation in Dvāpara-yuga he was the son of Rohiṇī; now, he has appeared, as the son of Padmāvatī.

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<sup>44</sup> No mood (*bhāva* or *prema*) is higher than that of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

svayaṁ śrī caitanya vīra, rūpe koilā avatāra,  
 avaśiṣṭa loka tarāite  
 vasura nandana khyāta, sarva jana sama prīta,  
 guṇa gāya e tina jagate (2)

“Śrī Caitanya Himself descended again in the form of Vīracandra to deliver those who haven’t been delivered. He is famous as the son of Vasudhā and is equally compassionate to all *jīvas*. His glories are sung throughout the three worlds.”

### Commentary:

Next, Rāmāi Ṭhākura glorifies the dynasty of Nityānanda Prabhu. He revealed a very confidential secret about Vīracandra Prabhu, as Svayaṁ Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu himself. Why did he appear again, as Vīracandra Prabhu? There was something he had not finished during his advent as Śrīman Mahāprabhu. If we study his life history, we will see that he performed his *prakṣaṭa-līlā* in this world for only forty-eight years. At the age of twenty-four he accepted *sannyāsa*. So many duties were left incomplete. The *sannyāsa* rule is such that after accepting *sannyāsa* life, one is not allowed to associate with *grhasthas*. This is the reason why he lamented after taking *sannyāsa*. “Accepting *sannyāsa* was not my desire or the reason why I descended to this world. Distributing prema was the goal of my life. I accepted *sannyāsa* only to teach others the meaning of renunciation.”

He was Nimāi Paṇḍita before he took *sannyāsa*. After the demise of his father he went to Gayā to offer rice bhoga to Viṣṇu-pāda-padma. There he met Īśvara Purīpāda and received initiation from him. Then his mood changed from Nimāi Paṇḍita to that of a renunciate.

After his *sannyāsa*, he did not preach. Whatever preaching he did was before he took *sannyāsa*. Kazi *uddhāra* (deliverance), Jagāi Mādāi *uddhāra*, Harināma *pravartana* (propagation) and everything else he did was before *sannyāsa*. When he accepted *sannyāsa*, he started lamenting that there were still so many tasks left unaccomplished. He had appeared to deliver the fallen souls of Kali-yuga but the *sannyāsa* rules prevented him from accomplishing all that he desired to do. So, he decided to reappear again to complete his mission. He told Nityānanda Prabhu, “I will appear again in your lineage”. Vīracandra, the son of Nityānanda Prabhu, is none other than Mahāprabhu, who descended again to complete the unfulfilled goals of Mahāprabhu’s mission. Rāmāi Ṭhākura states this truth here: *svayaṁ śrī caitanya vīra rūpe koilā avatāra avaśiṣṭa loka tarāite*, for those who were

deprived of getting the blessings of Mahāprabhu, Mahāprabhu appeared for them again as Vīracandra. The revelation of Mahāprabhu's glories through Vīracandra happened at the Kheturi *mahotsava* (festival).

There was a blind devotee who was very attached to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, but he never got his *darśan* because he was blind. The blind devotee was there during the Keturi festival, when Vīracandra Prabhu performed kirtan and dancing with the devotees. During that time, the blind devotee sensed the presence of Mahāprabhu. He felt that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu must have come again just for him. He desperately wanted to take his *darśan*. He was lamenting and crying profusely in his heart. Suddenly, he got his eyesight back and was able to take *darśan* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the form of Vīracandra. He started dancing in ecstasy with him. All the three worlds glorify Vīracandra, who appeared as the son of Vasudhā Mātā.

vīracandraṁ prabhuṁ vande śrī caitanya prabhuṁ svayam  
kṛṣṇaṁ dviṭīyāvatāraṁ bhuvana traya-tāraṁ (3)

“I offer praises to Vīracandra Prabhu who is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself reincarnate, who is himself a nondifferent descension of Kṛṣṇa manifested to deliver the three worlds. “(Bhajana Candrikā)

ananta tāhāra vaṁśa, trijagata avatamsa,  
sabhe tīrtha pūta avatāra  
yāhāra smaraṇa mātra, sarva loka caritārtha,  
ki jānibo mahimā tāhāra (4)

“His dynasty is unlimited<sup>45</sup> and his descendants sanctify the three worlds. They appear just to purify the holy places. Blessed are those, who remember them. How can I describe their glories?”

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<sup>45</sup> In the printed edition, the phrase *ananta tāhāra vaṁśa* is translated as “His descendants are eternal.” Such a translation is wrong and misleading. This is a gross interpolation of the editor. Except for Vīracandra and his sister Gaṅgādevī Goswāmīnī, none of the Nityānanda *vaṁśa* descendants are *nitya-siddhas*.

### Commentary:

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura further glorifies the descendants of Nityānanda Prabhu. All the descendants of Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Vīracandra are eternal<sup>46</sup> and they sanctify the three worlds. By their power they can purify all the holy *tirthas*. In Nityānanda Prabhu's lineage the history of every one of the descendants is really astonishing. For example, the fifth descendant of Śrī Nityānanda, Hari Govinda Prabhu, went to preach in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) by the order of Nityānanda Prabhu who came in his dream. One of his descendants, Lochanānanda Prabhu, the son of Lakṣmī Kānta Prabhu, was a strict *brahmacārī* and he used to perform intense *bhajana*. Once he went to Sitākunḍa, a place of pilgrimage in Bangladesh. There is a big mountain in Sītānātha, which has two different forms of Lord Śiva. At the foot of the mountain resides Kamaleśvara Mahādeva and at the top of the mountain resides Candranātha Mahādeva.

There is a myth in Bangladesh that if one could perform *rudra-abhisheka* of both deities of Śiva on the same day, one hundred percent result of one's Śiva worship will be bestowed. Many people tried, but they could not accomplish such a *vratā*. There is also a *śakti-pīṭha* at this place. There are fifty-one different *śakti-pīṭhas* all over the world. After Sati Devī sacrificed her body in her father's *yajña*, Lord Śiva, in his intense grief, carried her body and started to dance the *tandava* dance of destruction. To calm Lord Śiva's anger, Śrī Viṣṇu sent his Sudarśana *cakra*, and it cut her body into fifty-one pieces. The pieces of her body scattered in different parts of India, Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and other places.

In the *śakti-pīṭha* at Sītānātha, there was a customary ritual to daily offer about two hundred goats in sacrifice to Devī. My forefather, Śrī Locanānanda Prabhu, went there on pilgrimage. At midnight, while he was meditating on the mountainside, a male form appeared before him. His complexion was very dark, but his form was not terrifying. He was very calm and peaceful. So Prabhupād asked him who he was. The form told him, that he was Kāla Bhairava, Lord Śiva. When Prabhupād asked him why he had approached him, Kāla Bhairava said, "Do you know why my complexion is so dark? Many people come here and slaughter animals in sacrifice. Because of their sinful activities, my complexion has changed to this dark colour. I have come to you for Kṛṣṇa *mantra-dīkṣā*." Prabhupād was surprised and he said, "How can I give initiation to my *iṣṭadeva*? You are Lord Śiva." Kāla Bhairava said, "I am ordering you, so you can do it, and it is essential for

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<sup>46</sup> This is simply untrue and contrary to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*.

me.” So, Prabhupād said, “Alright, if you are ordering me, then I have to obey your instructions, but for initiation you have to offer *guru-dakṣiṇa*.” Kāla Bhairava asked him what he wants for *guru-dakṣiṇa* and Prabhupād said, “I want you to promise that you will stop this ritual of *bali* (animal sacrifice) from now on.” Kāla Bhairava said, “Yes, certainly I will stop it. My complexion changed due to that.” So, Prabhupād gave him Kṛṣṇa *mantra-dīkṣā* and since then the slaughtering of animals in sacrifice to Devī stopped.

Another very nice story is about Lakṣmī Kānta Prabhu. In Vṛndāvana, our temple Lakṣmī Kānta Kuñja, is named after him. He was a traveling preacher. There were many rivers in East Bengal, and in those days people used the river for traveling by boat from one place to another. Whenever Lakṣmī Kānta Prabhu was going to cross the river by boat, another boat would go in front with a drummer on board to announce, that he was going to cross the river. Due to that he was popularly known, as ‘Danka Prabhu.’ Danka means a big drum. One day a Muslim King heard the sound of the drum and he asked his secretary where it was coming from. The secretary was a Hindu, and he told the King, “Oh, Danka Prabhu will be arriving soon by the river.” The king asked, “Who is this Danka Prabhu?” He replied, that Danka Prabhu is Prabhupād Lakṣmī Kānta, “Who is he?” the king asked. His secretary started glorifying him and said, “He is the king of all kings.” “Oh, let me check him out and see how powerful he is” the King said, He sent his men to the riverside and stopped the boat. The king approached Prabhupād and acted very politely, saying, “I am very fortunate that such a great personality like you, has come to my district,” He then invited Prabhupād to his home and asked what service he could offer. Prabhupād accepted his invitation, but said he would not go to his palace. Instead he would stay on the banks of the river. So, the King arranged for a nice tent to be put up for everyone and planned a big feast for Prabhupād and his disciples. The King came to see Prabhupād and said, “Tomorrow I will arrange a feast of my choice, and you have to honour it,” Prabhupād agreed. His disciples cautioned him that the King was a Muslim and may have wrong intentions. However, Prabhupād accepted the invitation, but on one condition: If he was not able to eat any items that the King offered him, then the King would have to give up eating that same food item. The next day the King brought many dishes to the tent. The disciples were feeling nervous, as the smell of non-vegetarian food was filling the air although all the pots were covered. When the food was laid out, Prabhupād opened the rice pot, which was in the middle, and to everyone’s surprise the rice pot was full of fragrant

flowers. Then he started opening the other pots containing fish, chicken and mutton. As soon as he opened the pot containing fish, the fish became alive and jumped into the river. Similarly, the chicken and the goat became alive and ran away. The King was shocked, but did not give up. The next day he again tried to test Prabhupād. He brought meat dishes and the same thing happened. Then Prabhupād told him, “Now you have to keep your promise; you will have to give up eating all those food preparations you served me that I could not eat.” The King immediately fell at Prabhupād’s feet, begged for forgiveness, and requested initiation from him. To this day the descendants of this King and their family members are vegetarians even though they are Muslims.

*Sabhe tīrtha pūta avatāra*, it is true that they are purifying all the places of pilgrimage. All the descendants of Nityānanda Prabhu have the power; *padam-padam-tirtha-padam*, they purify whichever place they go to. Only devotees can purify places of pilgrimage. Wherever Kṛṣṇa and all his avatāras performed their *līlās*, those places are known as *tīrthas*, places of pilgrimage. The devotees of the Lord are able to convert any place they visit into a holy place by placing their feet there. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is revealing the power of the descendants of Nityānanda Prabhu. They are not ordinary people; they are born with special qualities.

jaya jaya śrī jāhnavā, gopīnātha vallabhā,  
 bhuvana mohana manohārī  
 śrī rādhikā priyatamā, rūpa guṇe anupamā,  
 karuṇāte jagat uddhārī (5)

“All glories to Śrī Jāhnavā, the beloved of Gopīnātha, who enchants even the enchanter of the whole universe (Cupid). She is Śrī Radhika’s dearest sister, whose form and qualities are matchless, and out of her great compassion, she delivers the whole world.”

### Commentary:

Now Rāmāi Ṭhākura is glorifying Mā Jāhnavā, the beloved of Gopīnātha. He is referring to her in the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī, who is not only a *mañjarī*, but sometimes acts like Rādhārāṇī. She is *bhuvana-mohana-manohārī*, one who enchants even the enchanter of the whole planetary system. She is the dearest sister of Rādhārāṇī. Her form and qualities are matchless. *Karuṇāte jagat uddhārī*, she appeared to deliver the whole world. After the disappearance of the three Prabhus – Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda

Prabhu and Advaita Prabhu – all their very close associates went into a reclusive mood and remained hidden, absorbed in their own *bhajana*. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism fell into a dark age and someone had to revive the *sampradāya* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Jāhnavā Mā was the one who created a new wave of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism by becoming the guiding force and pillar of Vīracandra Prabhu’s preaching mission.

Vīracandra Prabhu wanted to take initiation from Advaita Ācārya after the disappearance of Nityānanda Prabhu. When Advaita Ācārya heard about it, he was surprised. He thought, “Why is Vīracandra coming to me? His guru is in his own house. It is not possible for me to give initiation to my *iṣṭas* (worshipable ones).” Advaita Prabhu refused to give him initiation and started to glorify Mā Jāhnavā. He told Vīracandra Prabhu that Mā Jāhnavā is his guru and told him to go back and take initiation from her. He went back home confused. The next day, while Vīracandra Prabhu was taking prasāda, Vasudha Mā was sitting in front of him and Jāhnavā Mā was serving him all items one after another. While she was serving with both hands, the cloth that was covering her head slipped off. At that moment, to Vīracandra’s surprise, another two arms appeared from Mā Jāhnavā and covered her head with the cloth that had slipped off, while her other two hands were busy serving him. This jolted him into the realisation that she was not just any ordinary person and he understood what Advaita Prabhu meant. After this incident, he happily surrendered to her without any doubt and accepted *dīkṣā* from her. After she initiated Vīracandra, Mā Jāhnavā started the revival of Mahāprabhu’s preaching movement through Vīracandra, beginning with the Kheturi *mahotsava*.

baladeva śakti dhāma, dharilā jāhnavā nāma,  
pūrve chilā anaṅga mañjarī  
nityānanda anurāga, eka dehe dui bhāga,  
dekhāilā jīve kṛpa kori (6)

“Baladeva’s *śakti* potency bears the name Jāhnavā, who was previously Anaṅga Mañjarī. Her mind is always attached to Nityānanda. Having two potencies in one form, she bestows mercy on all *jīvas*.”

### Commentary:

Baladeva’s pleasure potency bears the name Jāhnavā, who was previously known as Anaṅga Mañjarī. She is the feminine potency of Baladeva Candra. She, who was Anaṅga Mañjarī, has now appeared with the



name of Jāhnavā. Her mind is always attached to Śrī Nityānanda. Within one form there is Mā Jāhnavā, Anaṅga Mañjarī, Baladeva Candra and Nityānanda; all four in one.

*Tathā hi Bhajana Candrikāyām:*

anaṅga mañjarī yā sā jāhnavā parikīrtitā vidagdḥā  
rasikā dhīrā gaurāṅgī nayanāmbujā (7)

sūrya dāsa sutā devī sūkṣma vastra vidhārīnī  
hasta pādāi sarvāṅge nānālankāra bhūṣitā (8)

sona campaka varnādhyā koṭi candra mukha dyuti  
nityānanda guṇollāsī sadā tat pada bhāvinī (9)

“She who was Anaṅga Mañjarī is now famous as Jāhnavā Mā. She is very intelligent as well as deeply *rasikā*. She is grave, has a golden complexion, and lotus eyes.” (7)

“This Devī, the daughter of Sūrya Dāsa Paṇḍita, wears thin garments and her hands, feet, and other limbs are decorated with various ornaments.” (8)

“Her complexion is golden like *campaka* flowers, and her face defeats the lustre of millions of moons. She is always absorbed in meditating on her beloved Nityānanda and is delighted by His attributes.” (9)

### Commentary:

This is the last chapter of the Sampuṭikā, and Rāmāi Ṭhākura concludes the book by glorifying Mā Jāhnavā. He is revealing the truth about Mā Jāhnavā *tattva*. As this scripture is about Anaṅga Mañjarī, it will not be complete without the glorification of Jāhnavā Mā, because they are both one and the same. Only Mā Jāhnavā can grant us pure love of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, because she is Anaṅga Mañjarī. Therefore, it is very important to know about her. She has a very special mood and personality. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is now describing Mā Jāhnavā’s qualities.

anaṅga mañjarī yei, edānī jāhnavā sei  
śarad indu vadana maṇḍalā  
śona campaka svarṇa jini, gaura kānti varṇa dhanī,  
sulāvanya parama ujjvalā (10)

“She, who was Anaṅga Mañjarī, is now Mā Jāhnavā. Her face shines like the moon in the autumn season. Her complexion is like the golden *campaka* flower, and she is most elegant and radiant.”

### Commentary:

She who was Anaṅga Mañjarī in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, has now appeared in Kali-yuga as Mā Jāhnavā to spread her causeless mercy to everyone. Her face shines, like the moon in autumn. Her body complexion is very bright, defeating the brightness of gold. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is comparing her complexion with a *sona-campaka*. We can make a comparison of her body colour with gold and say her body is bright like gold, but he mentioned *svarṇa-campaka*, because the brightness of her complexion is not just golden, but also has a fragrance, like the *campaka* flower. So, the beauty of Mā Jāhnavā is not just like the brightness of gold, but the sweet aroma from her heart is filled with pure prema of Kṛṣṇa. When there is a fragrant flower nearby, we can smell its fragrance. We can appreciate the beauty of a flower not only by its colour or looks, but also by its fragrance. Mā Jāhnavā's complexion is not only bright like gold, but is also filled with the aroma of very pure *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

*Sona campaka svarṇa jini, gaura kānti varṇa dhanī, sulāvaṇya parama ujjvalā*, here Rāmāi Ṭhākura is repeating and emphasizing her golden effulgence. First, he says *sona campaka*, and then he repeats *gaura kānti varṇa dhanī*. He is saying the same thing in different ways, because *gaura kānti varṇa dhanī* is not connected with the brightness of her body effulgence; it is connected with the effulgence of her heart. The first phrase, *śona campaka*, was external body effulgence, but when he said *gaura kānti varṇa dhanī*, he indicates the effulgence of her heart.

Mā Jāhnavā appeared to distribute the very pure love of Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in this age of Kali-yuga as Gaura. When Kṛṣṇa changed to Gaura; Mā Jāhnavā also changed the complexion of her heart. Previously, when she was Anaṅga Mañjarī, it was *ujjvala śyāma kānti*, but now as Mā Jāhnavā the complexion and effulgence of her heart is *sulāvaṇya parama ujjvalā*, very bright golden.

ambujākṣī sumadhurā, vidagdha rasikā dhīrā,  
mṛdu smita madhura mūrātī  
nityānanda guṇllāsī pūrṇānandāmṛta rāśī,  
caitanya priyatamā ati (11)

“She has lotus-like eyes and is expert in all kinds of Rasika-bhāvas. She is very calm, quiet, and serious in nature. Her sweet form is adorned with a mild smile. She takes delight in Lord Nityānanda’s attributes, is full of nectarean bliss, and is very dear to Lord Caitanya.”

### Commentary:

*Ambujākṣī*, her eyes look like very beautiful lotuses, but which lotus? There are many different kinds of lotuses. *Suvarṇa-kamala* is the golden lotus. *Kukonot* is the red or pink lotus. Blue, indigo and white lotuses are called *phullari*. Different lotuses have different beauty, but which lotus beauty are Mā Jāhnavā’s eyes being compared to? The beauty of Mā Jāhnavā’s eyes are being compared to a golden lotus, by which she can see only the golden effulgence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when he appeared here as Gaura. Just as eyes reflect whichever colour appears in front of them, Mā Jāhnavā’s eyes, which are always focused on Gaura Kṛṣṇa, resemble the golden lotus, *suvarṇa-kamala*.

Rāmāi Thākura has used the most appropriate words to express the character of Mā Jāhnavā, and all the words are very significant and important for our *bhājana*. *Sumadhurā*, she is very soft in her mood, her speech and all her activities. She is the personification of sweetness. If we make a doll out of *sandeśa*, every part of the doll will taste like sweet *sandeśa*. When we meditate upon Mā Jāhnavā, we will get the sweetness of Gaura Kṛṣṇa, because she is always relishing that and is mercifully showering it upon us. She is very wise and intelligent. We are very fortunate to be connected to Mā Jāhnavā, who is Anaṅga Mañjarī.

All the associates in Kali-yuga are very distinct, more so than in Dvāpara-yuga. The eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī appeared here in Kali-yuga with Śrī Gaurasundara. Kṛṣṇa appeared here as Gaura in a hidden form with a very merciful and unique mood. Similarly, all his eternal associates also appeared with him with distinct moods. When he appeared as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, we cannot imagine how much Kṛṣṇa changed his mood of compassion for us. In his form as Kṛṣṇa, he shared *vraja-prema* only with his close associates.

kṛṣṇa yadi chuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā  
kabhu prema-bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

“If a devotee wants liberation or 1 sense gratification, Kṛṣṇa immediately delivers it, but pure devotional service, he keeps hidden.” (CC Ādi 8.18)

To others he offered material pleasure or wealth and occasionally he offered *mukti*, liberation, but he did not offered his prema so easily. Kṛṣṇa always tries to hide his prema. Intelligent persons will try to find out what he is hiding and with their intense greed, they force him to reveal his pure prema to them. And even this may be only prema but not *vraja-prema*. Some very special devotees, like Śrutadeva, Bahulāśva and Sudama Vipra all received prema, but not *vraja-prema*. Kṛṣṇa is always trying to hide his *vraja-prema*. In Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa saw how fallen the conditioned souls were and realized his own lack of compassion for them. He had made many promises, but had not kept them. As Gaura Candra, he wanted to make up for this and he gave more than he had ever given in any previous incarnation. He decided to give us *vraja-prema*, which he distributed freely to everyone. *Cāri bhāva-bhakti diyā nācāmu bhuvana* (CC Ādi 3.19), I shall make everyone dance with *vraja-prema* in all corners of the world. He said, “In Kali-yuga, I will freely distribute this to everyone, without considering their eligibility, even if they be most fallen. I will personally prepare them and bring them to a platform worthy of receiving prema.” Kṛṣṇa appeared having changed his mood, and he transferred everything from his heart to all the living entities.

He told Śrīpāda Nityānanda to preach to everyone, not only human beings, but all living entities, moving and non-moving. He ordered Nityānanda Prabhu, “You must give Harināma and prema to any *jīva* that appears in front of your eyes.” We are very fortunate that Kṛṣṇa transformed his nature from that of a reserved mood in Dvāpara-yuga to a very lenient and compassionate mood in Kali-yuga. Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī are always merciful and compassionate regardless of any *yuga*. In Kali-yuga they are exceptionally merciful. Their mercy is unlimited.

Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī appeared as Mā Jāhnavā, and it is only by her mercy, that we are able to chant the *mahā-mantra* today; otherwise, everything would have vanished. When the three Prabhus – Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Advaita Prabhu – disappeared, after completing their external pastimes in this material world, all their close associates dropped their external activities as a result of their pain of separation. They remained away from the masses and continued their *bhajana* in seclusion as recluses in their own *kuṭīras*. A period of darkness was experienced by all the devotees during that time. The *smārtas* and *śaktas* became very powerful and started to dominate and destroy Vaiṣṇavism.

It is a shocking experience for anyone who visits Navadvīpa during the Rāsa-Pūrṇimā festival. Throughout Navadvīpa, at every corner, huge deities of Goddess Śakti, about ten feet in height, are worshipped during

Rasa-Pūrṇimā. This was started by King Kṛṣṇa Candra, who wanted to destroy Vaiṣṇavism, because he was a very strong and dedicated *śakta* follower. He distributed money to everyone to celebrate Śakti Devī *pūjā* on the day of Rāsa-Pūrṇimā. This continued for about fifty-years under his influence. Consequently, the following generations became ignorant of the true significance of the Rāsa-festival. It was Kṛṣṇa Candra Maharaja's intention to totally eradicate the Rāsa-Pūrṇimā celebration. To date, Rāsa-Pūrṇimā is celebrated as a day for Śakti Devī worship in Navadvīpa. The actual significance of celebrating Rāsa-Pūrṇimā, which is to commemorate the Rāsa-festival of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, has been totally forgotten. Present day *śaktas* give the excuse that Kṛṣṇa Candra Maharaja wanted to show how all the other demigods and goddesses desire to watch the Rāsa-dance, so they all come down to attend the Rāsa-festival. They concocted a good excuse for their present-day activities. It is very sad to see such activities still going on during Rāsa-Pūrṇimā in the holy Dhāma of Navadvīpa. This misguided tradition has appeared due to the ignorance of the *smārtas* and *śaktas*. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism started losing ground due to this. It was Mā Jāhnavā, who again re-established Vaiṣṇavism which had become submerged in darkness. We are now swimming in that wave of Mā Jāhnavā's causeless mercy. Today, if we are still able to chant the *mahā-mantra*, it is only because of Mā Jāhnavā.

She re-introduced us to the Gosvāmīs and the followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Prabhu, and once again filled our hearts with the sweetness of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. She is always absorbed in the very special mood of Śrī Nityānanda: spreading the pure eternal bliss of *kṛṣṇa-prema* generously to everyone, qualified or unqualified, and simultaneously preparing our hearts to receive *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

*Caitanyera priyatamā ati*, here Rāmāi Ṭhākura mentions that Mā Jāhnavā is very close and dear to Śrī Caitanya. It is unusual to say that a married girl is very close to another man; this is never mentioned in Hindu culture. If Rāmāi Ṭhākura has mentioned it in this way, the reason is that Nityānanda and Jāhnavā are not two; they are one in two bodies. Both of them are Anaṅga Mañjarī – lovers of Kṛṣṇa. The only difference is that here Śrī Kṛṣṇa has appeared as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu .

There is one story told from the heart of a *rasika-bhakta*, who was recalling the time after Śrī Kṛṣṇa closed the curtain on his pastimes in this material world. When he went back to his eternal abode of Goloka Vṛndāvana, Rādhārāṇī asked Kṛṣṇa, “O Prāṇa Vallabha! How much love did you have for me in Bhauma Vṛndāvana?” Kṛṣṇa replied. “O Rādhē! I had

unlimited love for you there, more than I had for myself.” “How much attachment did you have for me?” “It was matchless; you can never compare that attachment to anything else.” Then the final question came, “Then why did you not marry me? Right in front of your eyes my parents arranged my marriage to somebody else. I could not tell my parents that we were in love. It is unusual for a girl to reveal this to her parents, but you could have told them. Why did you not do so?” Kṛṣṇa replied, “Marriage must be arranged between two persons. Two people marry, but how can I marry you when we are one?”

In the opening *śloka* of this Sampuṭikā, Rāmāi Ṭhākura explained this truth, *rādhā, kṛṣṇa, balarāma eka vastu tina nāma*: Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, all three of them are one. Very surprisingly, it is the truth. *Caitanyera priyatamā ati*, although Nityānanda is her husband, the truth is that they are both one. When there is a description of the beauty and qualities of Mā Jāhnavā, we must bear in mind that the description of Nityānanda is included automatically, as both are one. Mā Jāhnavā is as devoted to Śrī Caitanya as she is to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of Anaṅga Mañjarī. She plays the role of Saṅkarṣaṇa in the form of Nityānanda in Caitanya-līlā and Anaṅga Mañjarī in Kṛṣṇa-līlā.

This is the astonishing truth of Nityānanda Prabhu and Mā Jāhnavā. They are both Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva, Balarāma. Whenever Kṛṣṇa appears, Saṅkarṣaṇa will appear along with him, because without Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa cannot perform any *līlās*. Saṅkarṣaṇa is everything for Kṛṣṇa. His dresses, his ornaments, his umbrella, even his mood, his love, his thoughts, his words – everything is Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva. If Saṅkarṣaṇa is not with Svayam Bhagavān, he cannot do anything. Take Saṅkarṣaṇa away from Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is bare; no ornaments and no garlands.

So, if Balarāma as Saṅkarṣaṇa-tattva is present, then why is the presence of Anaṅga Mañjarī required? Because Balarāma is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, and as such he cannot enter into the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa when he is enjoying with his beloved. It is a contradiction of etiquette in Indian culture for an elder brother to witness his younger brother’s love play. The wife of the younger brother should cover her head in front of her husband’s elder brother. So, it is not possible for Balarāma to enter the *nikuñja-vilāsa* where Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī are playing their confidential pastimes. This is the reason for the manifestation of Balarāma’s female potency, Anaṅga Mañjarī. She appeared as the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī to please Kṛṣṇa in the mood of Rādhārāṇī. That is what this Sampuṭikā is all about.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura has revealed all the secret truths about Anaṅga Mañjarī to us. Among the *mañjarīs*, Anaṅga Mañjarī is closest and dearest to Kṛṣṇa. Only she can reveal such confidential truths; no one else can, not even Rūpa Mañjarī. Only the *mañjarīs* are allowed to witness the intimate scenes, not even the *sakhīs*. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are very open in front of their *mañjarīs*, because they serve without desiring anything for themselves and they will not reveal these secrets to anyone. Rūpa Mañjarī belongs to this category. She is the leader of all the *mañjarīs*, but Anaṅga Mañjarī is little different. On one hand she is the leader of the *mañjarīs*, and on the other hand she is the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the dear younger sister of Rādhārāṇī. If we take shelter of her lotus feet, she will introduce us to Rādhārāṇī, and Rādhārāṇī will accept our service without examining us further. She will just ask with a smile on her face, “Where did you find this beautiful maidservant?” The smile indicates that she is accepting and bestowing her mercy on the new maidservant. Anaṅga and Rūpa Mañjarī introduce, and Rādhārāṇī accepts with a smiling face.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is revealing the truth about *caitanya priyatamā ati Mā Jāhnavā*, who is very close and dear to Śrī Caitanya and is holding a huge pot full of mercy in her hands. She is waiting to distribute it to one and all. We should immediately take shelter at her lotus feet to obtain that mercy. In these following verses Rāmāi Ṭhākura describes the *tattva*, the truths, about Mā Jāhnavā.

nityānanda śrī caitanya, nija pūrṇa kori jāne,  
 heno cittyā śrīmatī jāhnavā  
 vīracandra śiṣya yāra, ki jāni mahimā tāra,  
 guṇa varṇe heno āche kebā (12)

“Śrīmatī Jāhnavā considered Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya her life and soul; that was the mood of her heart. Who can describe the attributes of one who has a disciple such as Vīracandra ?”

### Commentary:

O Mā Jāhnavā! You are the closest and dearest of Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya; both are your life and soul. You place both of them on the same platform in your heart, because you know the truth that they are non-different forms. By the mercy of Nityānanda, we attain Śrī Caitanya, and by the mercy of Śrī Caitanya, we can realize Nityānanda. By her example, Mā Jāhnavā is teaching us to love both of them as our life and soul, because that was the

mood of her own heart. Mā Jāhnavā trained and prepared Vīracandra, and she was the pillar behind his powerful preaching mission.

akhila jagata jāyā, sarva jīve kori dayā,  
nityānanda saṁhati vihari  
mo adhame ei koro, pāda padme nirantara,  
rahe mana kabhu nā pāsari (13)

“Along with Nityānanda Prabhu, Mā Jāhnavā bestows her grace upon all the conditioned souls in the world. O Mā Jāhnavā! Please let my mind and heart always focus on yours and Nityānanda Prabhu’s lotus feet; let not my fickle mind stray hither and thither in ignorance.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Thākura is praying to Mā Jāhnavā to be a recipient of the flood of mercy that she is showering upon the fallen *jīvas*. He is teaching us the mood of single-pointed surrender. When we surrender, our words and actions must be the same. We pray and make promises in front of Kṛṣṇa, but in our actions, we repeat the same mistakes. What we say is not that important; what we do is important. We must check ourselves daily to see how much time is spent for spiritual progress, and how much for material engagements. By observing the proportion of time we give to each, we can understand how surrendered we are. As long as we do not have unconditional surrender and love, the time dedicated to spiritual pursuits will never be one hundred percent.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that by our own efforts we cannot be successful. We have to be prepared to surrender in such a way that we can attract the mercy of Śrī guru, the Vaiṣṇavas and Śrī Rādhā Govinda, and then we will be successful. When that merciful wind blows from a favourable direction towards us, then our actions will be pure. When we perform all our activities as service to them, they watch how sincerely we are trying, and when they are satisfied by our efforts, the mercy will start to flow. The desire will first flow from our heart, and one day by the mercy of Śrī Gurudeva and the Vaiṣṇavas, our surrender will be unconditional. First, we have to make an effort to surrender and take shelter. There will be many obstacles in the beginning, but slowly they will all vanish and one day that unconditional surrender will manifest.



tomāra mahimā yofo, mui chāra jāni koto,  
 nija guṇe tāra dayāmayī  
 koriyā karuṇā dṛṣṭi, pūrāho manera iṣṭi,  
 duḥkha nāśa koro duḥkhajayī (14)

“I cannot explain all your glories, because they are countless. You are naturally full of compassion. Please cast a merciful glance on me and fulfil my desires. Please destroy my misery and give me the strength to conquer distress.”

### Commentary:

No one can describe the glories of Mā Jāhnavā, not even four-headed Brahmā. Brahmā said that he cannot describe the glories of Rādhārāṇī even with his four heads and four mouths. In qualities Anaṅga Mañjarī is the same as Rādhārāṇī. So Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, “Although I cannot really sing your glories perfectly, as they are countless and matchless, I am attempting to do so. By your causeless mercy, if you plant the seed of your knowledge in my heart, then I will nourish it and it will sprout.”

Śrī Gurudeva has planted that seed of *bhajana* by chanting the mantra in our ear. Through the mantras he has planted the seed of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* in our heart, and now our duty is to take care and nourish that seed till it sprouts. After the seed sprouts, we have to protect it with a proper fence; otherwise, birds and animals will destroy it. Until our *bhakti-latā* grows into a strong tree, we have to protect it from being destroyed by following all the instructions given by Gurudeva. Actually, the bhakti seed never dies. Kṛṣṇa says, *na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati* (BG 9.31), my devotees never perish, because the seed of bhakti can never be destroyed. On one hand, bhakti practice is very easy, but on the other hand, it is very difficult to follow.

Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura said, *je gaurāṅgera nāma laya tā'ra haya premodaya*, whoever chants the name of Gaurāṅga, prema will manifest in his heart without difficulty, but why is it that when we chant the name of Gaurāṅga, no tears are flowing? *Prema-aśru* (tears of prema) that flow from pure prema is very rare. They can appear only by mercy. To receive that mercy, we must purify our heart and mind so they will be in a favourable mood to Śrī Gurudeva, the Vaiṣṇavas, Nitāi-Gaura and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Then *prema-aśru* will flow.

*Koriyā karuṇā dṛṣṭi, pūrāho manera iṣṭi, duḥkha nāśa koro duḥkhajayī*, “O Mā Jāhnavā! We are here absorbed in illusory material pleasures, which give only distress. Ignorance has blinded us to reality. O my

sweet mother! That is why I am praying to you; we are all your children. Please take care of us, as a mother cares for her children.” We are caught in this world of *samsara*, and everything here is fake. Therefore, it is known as *samsara*. *Sam* means acting. This world is like a stage where everyone is acting with one another. We have all accepted this *samsara* as the essence of our life. Only when the darkness of ignorance is destroyed in our heart will we be able to realize the truth of our existence. “O mother! Please reveal this knowledge (about the truth of our existence) to your innocent children, who do not know what is good or bad.”

sūrya dāsa paṇḍita sutā, sarva guṇe samanvitā,  
pāda-padme nivedana kori  
janma hoy yathā tathā, ithe mora nahe vyathā,  
svapne yeno tom a na pasari (15)

“O merciful daughter of Surya Dāsa, who is endowed with all great qualities, I humbly plead at your lotus feet: In whatever form I may have to appear again in different births, it does not matter; as long as I do not forget you even in my dreams, it will not cause me any distress.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says, he is not afraid to be born anywhere, even as an animal, as long as he doesn’t forget her.

kiye mānuṣa paśu-pākhī je janamiye,  
athavā kīṭa-pataṅge  
karama-vipāke, gatāgati punaḥ punaḥ,  
mati rahu tuwā parasaṅge (3)

“Impelled by my karma, I may take birth as a human, as an animal, as a bird, or even as a worm or a bug. Again and again reaping the consequences of my actions, I tumble about from one fate to the next. Nonetheless, may my absorption remain in You.” (Śrī Vidyāpati, Mādhava! Bahuta Minati Kori).

“I do not expect to be fortunate enough to be born as a human in my next life, as I have not performed any good karma. Even if I am born as a plant, as grass, as an insect or an animal, I have no fear and will accept it happily, on one condition: that I stay focused on your lotus feet. That is sufficient for

me. Please shower your mercy upon me that in whichever form I take birth, my mind will always stay fixed on your lotus feet.”

tava pāda-padme mati, nirantara rahe sthiti,  
 heno kṛpā koribe āmāre  
 mukta-kaṇṭhe boli śuno, vadanete dhari tṇa,  
 ei bhikṣā māgi parihāre (16)

“This is my steadfast prayer unto you! Holding a straw between my teeth with a firm resolution, I beg you to keep me always at your lotus feet. I have surrendered with only one condition: that I will always be with you. I beg you for these alms.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura with all humility spreads his begging cloth in front of Jāhnavā Mā. He hopes that she will not turn him away empty-handed. He is not asking for any material pleasure, nor any high position in his spiritual life. He is only asking that his mind should always remain focused at her lotus feet. We will see what Mā Jāhnavā’s response will be to this prayer and how she fills his begging cloth.

śuno vṛṣabhānu-sutā, rādhikāra kaniṣṭhatā,  
 abhimanyu anujabhāvinī  
 rādhā-śyāma yathā saṅge, vilāsa koroho raṅge,  
 tathā loho nija dāsī jāni (17)

“Please listen, O daughter of Vṛṣabhānu, O Rādhikā’s younger sister and younger sister-in-law of Abhimanyu! Whenever and wherever you will be playing pastimes with Rādhā and Śyāma, please take this maidservant along!”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura prays to Anaṅga Mañjarī through Mā Jāhnavā, “Please listen to my humble request. I want to say something. I know that when serving Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the *mañjarī*’s eligibility for *nikuñja-sevā* is to have no self-desire. Their aim is to please Rādhārāṇī in her service to Kṛṣṇa, but I have still not been accepted. I am making a humble plea, to please accept me in your group as one of your family members. I promise to abide by all your wishes.”

māṭṛ piṭṛ gṛha hoite, tumi jāho yāvaṭete,  
 rādhā saṅge mañjarīra gaṇe  
 sekālete saṅge thāki, nayāna bhariyā dekhi,  
 ei prasāde koro ei jāne (18)

“Along with Rādhā, you leave your parent’s house to return to Yāvaṭa, accompanied by a group of *mañjarīs*. Please be so kind as to allow me to see your pastimes there to the full satisfaction of my eyes in the company of all the others.”

### Commentary:

“O Anaṅga Mañjarī, whenever Rādhā and Śyāma are engaged in their secret pastimes in the *nikuñja-vilāsa*, I know you will be there with them, as Rādhārāṇī will always ask for you and Rūpa Mañjarī. Please allow me to assist you. I want to make my life successful by serving them in their secret pastimes. I can only be granted that service if you allow me to help you serve Rādhā-Govinda. You are always going to Yāvaṭa from your parents’ house with Rādhārāṇī and all the other *mañjarīs*. It is my great desire to witness the scene of Rādhārāṇī leaving for Yāvaṭa, and to see in which mood she leaves. O Anaṅga, just as you allowed all the other *mañjarīs* to accompany you, I beg you to grant me that *sevā* too.”

“Please kindly accept me. I want to serve them and at the same time watch all the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda playing jokes with each other and all the other *sakhīs*, but that alone is not exactly what I want. I want to be inside the *raha-nikuñja*, in their secret chamber in the *kuñja*, where no one else other than the *mañjarīs* are allowed by your and Rūpa Mañjarī’s permission. Please allow me to witness these secret pastimes.”

Mañjarīs are the only witnesses to the secret pastimes. During their love quarrels, Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa call out only for their intimate *mañjarīs*. Whenever Rādhārāṇī confronts Kṛṣṇa with some fault he had committed and if Kṛṣṇa denies it, Rādhārāṇī will request her *mañjarīs*, who witnessed the misdeed, to defend her. They stand as referees in the divine couple’s love quarrel. The *mañjarīs* are very clever. Sometimes to end the fight, they try to pacify Rādhārāṇī by covering up Kṛṣṇa’s fault. In this way, Rādhārāṇī calms down.

The *mañjarīs* are very intelligent and they know how to be tactful when necessary. That is their nature. They are the only witnesses to the secret pastimes. They remember every detail of the pastimes and can portray the whole play, like a video camera. So Rāmāi Ṭhākura is praying to Anaṅga

Mañjarī to grant him permission to witness those pastimes. Please bless me to be present at that moment, when Rādhārāṇī leaves your parents' home in Varṣāṇā to go to her in-laws residence in Yāvaṭa, accompanied by you and all the other *mañjarīs*.

jaṭilā ādara kori, rādhānaṅga mañjarī  
 āni gr̥he bosāibe sukhe  
 se samaya dui aṅge, cāmara koribo raṅge,  
 dāḍāiyā dohāra sanmukhe (19)

“Jaṭilā welcomes both you and Rādhārāṇī. Then she happily arranges for both of you to be seated comfortably inside the house. At that time, while standing before you both, I will fan you with a *cāmara*.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is praying earnestly. When Rādhārāṇī and Anaṅga Mañjarī arrive at their in-law's house in Yāvaṭa, their mother in-law Jaṭilā will greet them warmly and welcome them. Then, noticing that both her daughters-in-law are very tired, Jaṭilā will order, “They are very tired. Fan them and serve them cool drink.” I will be overjoyed to obey her instructions. I will first clean all the sweat from your faces with a very soft cloth and then I will offer cool scented water for you both to drink. I will wash both your feet, and by whisking the *cāmara*, I will cool both of you and relieve you from your tiredness.

When the *mañjarīs* serve Rādhā and Govinda, Rādhārāṇī does not give them any instructions. They receive indications from Anaṅga and Rūpa mañjarī. All conversations and instructions among the *mañjarīs* take place only through indications, when they are in the presence of Rādhā-Govinda. The *mañjarīs* do not speak or make any noise that may disturb them.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is praying to always be close to Anaṅga Mañjarī to receive the indications for instructions to serve Rādhā-Govinda. He sees Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rādhārāṇī as non-different forms and both are his Īśvarīs.

mukutā caritra kathā, lalitāra saṅge tathā,  
 dekhi kṛṣṇa koilo parihāsa  
 lalitā tomāre dhari, lukāiyā āache kori,  
 se rahasya parama ullāsa (20)

“In the story of Mukṭā-caritra, Kṛṣṇa saw you together with Lalitā Sakhī and started teasing you. Lalitā then held you and hid you behind her back (to protect you). These confidential pastimes give me the greatest delight.”<sup>47</sup>

### Commentary:

There is a story from Mukṭā-caritra, written by Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. One day all the *vraja-gopīs* wanted to celebrate a festival in honour of the cows. It was a special festival for the *gopas*. Rādhārāṇī and her *sakhīs* were busy making Kṛṣṇa’s garments. They were using *muktās*, pearls, to make pearl garments. They planned to celebrate this festival by all wearing the same kind of pearl garments. Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa also wanted to decorate his cows with pearls. When he asked the *sakhīs* for some pearls, they refused. They told him the pearls were too precious to be used for decorating his cows. Then he asked for just a small quantity. They asked him what he would do with just a handful of pearls to decorate his thousands of cows. He insisted, asking for just a few pearls. Finally, the *sakhīs* gave him some. Kṛṣṇa then planted the pearls in the ground. The *sakhīs* were puzzled to see this. After planting them he watered them with milk. To the *sakhīs*’ surprise, plants sprouted from the pearls and grew into large creepers in a short time. Kṛṣṇa had the creepers latch onto big trees and very soon it became a huge forest of pearl creepers hanging from the trees. After a few days lots of rare and high-quality pearls appeared on the creepers. Rādhārāṇī and her *sakhīs* were amazed to see the *muktā-latā* producing such beautiful pearls. The *sakhīs* and Rādhārāṇī felt defeated by Kṛṣṇa, and they pleaded with Paurṇamāsī Yogamāyā Devī to give them some idea how to defeat him. Paurṇamāsī told them that Kṛṣṇa did it with his *siddhi* powers and asked them to try the same and see if it worked for them. The *sakhīs* then fenced up a huge open area and planted pearls. They poured huge amounts of milk like Kṛṣṇa had done, but no plants sprouted from the pearls. Every day they nourished the pearls, but nothing happened. Then they had to beg Kṛṣṇa for some of his pearls.

Rāmāī Ṭhākura is remembering this story, *mukutā caritra kathā*, *lalitāra saṅge tathā*, whenever Kṛṣṇa sees Lalitā Sakhī, he teases her, “O Lalitā! What happened to your pearl cultivation? Did any *muktā-latā* sprout from them? Did you get any pearls?” Hearing Kṛṣṇa’s sarcastic remarks, out of embarrassment Lalitā hides behind Anaṅga Mañjarī. Usually Lalitā is

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<sup>47</sup> In the printed version the translation says that it is Anaṅga Mañjarī who hides Lalitā behind her back. This is a mistranslation. The verse above clearly says that Lalitā hides Anaṅga Mañjarī behind her back.

always daring in confronting Kṛṣṇa, and she never spares him her sharp words, teasing and humiliating him mercilessly. She taunts him by saying; that he knows nothing other than herding cows and stealing yoghurt and butter from the neighbours. This time Kṛṣṇa found a good chance to get even with her. Whenever he saw Lalitā, he would ask her sarcastically, “Oh Lalitā, did any creepers sprout from the pearls you planted?” So, whenever Kṛṣṇa begins teasing Lalitā in this manner, Lalitā Sakhī will quickly take shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī by hiding behind her. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is praying to watch these sweet pastimes by being present with Anaṅga Mañjarī during such pastimes.

heno daśā hobe mora, sei rase hobo bhora,  
se kautuka dekhibo nayane  
śrī kṛṣṇera hastāmba, tomāra saśanka aṅga  
lalitā korilo nivāraṇe (21)

“When will the day come, when I will be able to witness this and fill myself to the brim with this blissful humorous pastime when Kṛṣṇa would try to places His hands on your limbs and Lalitā would stop Him?”

### Commentary:

“Hey Anaṅga! When will I be granted this opportunity to witness all the joking and teasing pastimes between Kṛṣṇa and Lalitā? When Lalitā runs to hide behind you, Kṛṣṇa takes the opportunity to reach out and grab your hands very firmly in front of Rādhārāṇī. This surprises everyone, and you become extremely shy, turning red with embarrassment. Then, when Kṛṣṇa pulls you towards him, Lalitā tries to stop him and chastises him. When will I see the beauty of shyness on your face?”

āra koto śata līlā, rādhā saṅge ācarilā  
kṛṣṇa sukha hetu sukhamayī  
ati guhya līlā sāra, jānite sāmārthya kāra,  
nā jānāle jāne āche koi (22)

“Like this, there are endless *līlās* in so many different moods, that Anaṅga plays with Śrī Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure. Who will be able to understand the essence of these very confidential pastimes and who will know of them if I don’t reveal them?”

**Commentary:**

I am praying and taking shelter of your lotus feet. Please grant me entrance. It will be my great fortune to witness all these pastimes and reveal them to those who are qualified.

gāndhandkā-gaṇa yutā, madhye sarva guṇānvitā,  
rādhānaṅga mañjarī pradhāna  
sarva sakhī priyottamā, rūpe guṇe anupamā,  
kṛṣṇānanda rasera nidhāna (23)

“Amongst all the *gāndharvikā gopīs*, Rādhā and Anaṅga Mañjarī are the most qualified. They are dear-most to all the *sakhīs*. Their forms and qualities are matchless, and they are the abodes of Kṛṣṇa’s *rasika* pleasure.”

**Commentary:**

Gāndharvikā here refers to all the *vipakṣa gopīs*. Sometimes in scriptures we will find that Rādhārāṇī is also known as Gāndharvikā. It is one of her names. All those who belong to that group of Rādhārāṇī are known as *gāndharvikās*. They are adept in all sixty-four arts. Usually women have very special talents in all kinds of arts. All talent in every art is present within these *gāndharvikās*, and amongst all of them, *rādhānaṅga mañjarī pradhāna*, the group leaders of all *gāndharvikās* are Śrī Rādhā and Anaṅga Mañjarī. Both of them are very loving to all the *sakhīs* and have matchless beauty, which cannot be compared with anything, not even with the moon or the lotus. If we want to know about *kṛṣṇa-prema*, then we have to take shelter of their lotus feet. Without their mercy no one can realize or attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. We cannot approach Kṛṣṇa directly. We have to go through Anaṅga Mañjarī, and then through Rādhārāṇī to attain Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rūpa Mañjarī are the mentors of all *mañjarīs*; they will teach us the art of the finest service. Rādhārāṇī has appointed them to appoint the particular service of each *mañjarī*. So, they do not have to ask Rādhārāṇī’s approval first. They first engage and then introduce the new *mañjarī* to Rādhārāṇī. They have been authorised by Rādhārāṇī to make that choice, as she has full confidence in their decision. Rādhārāṇī knows; they are more expert in the art of service than herself. They know how to fulfil the desire of Rādhārāṇī for her service to Kṛṣṇa since they are the ones who are arranging everything for her.

Rādhārāṇī may be *guru-tattva* for Kṛṣṇa, but for the *mañjarīs*’ the *guru-tattva* is Anaṅga Mañjarī and Rūpa Mañjarī.



mādhavānaṅga mañjarī, nānā rasa līlā kori,  
 rādhā saha anaṅga kānane  
 sei līlā varṇibāre, ki jānibo mai chāre,  
 śeṣa ādi mahimā nā jāne (24)

“Mādhava and Anaṅga Mañjarī with Rādhā perform many kinds of amorous *rasika* pastimes in the forest. How can I describe these pastimes, the glories of which are not even known to Ananta Śeṣa.”

### Commentary:

Here, Rāmāi Ṭhākura used the name Mādhava, not Kṛṣṇa or any other name of Kṛṣṇa. Mādhava means one who is very thirsty to drink honey from different flowers. Rādhārāṇī is the flower he loves to drink honey from, but this time he went to the *kuñja* of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Rāmāi Ṭhākura refers to him as Mādhava, who goes to Anaṅga Ambuja Kuñja, and after sometime Rādhārāṇī also appears there.

Rāmāi is saying, “I am praying to see the scene of these beautiful pastimes. So many other secret *līlās* keep manifesting. No one can explain these newer and newer secret *līlās* that keep manifesting. No one, not even Ananta Śeṣa with his thousand mouths can describe them.” One form of Anaṅga Mañjarī is also Ananta-Śeṣa. He is not Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, but an expansion of Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa. He is known, as *sahasāraṅga*, because he has thousands of heads, faces and eyes. Even he cannot describe these pastimes. He may be able to watch, but he cannot describe everything.

“So, Rāmāi, a humble servant of yours, is pleading with you, Anaṅga. If you will not accept me and give me entrance into your pastimes, how will it be possible for me to describe all the stories of your very sweet, secret pastimes?”

nitya līlā etādṛśa, kore hari ahar-niśa,  
 kālākāla virāma nā hoy  
 rādhā gopī-gaṇa sahe, śrī govinda viharaye,  
 sādhu janā sadāi dekhaya (25)

“In this way, Śrī Hari performs his eternal pastimes day and night. Śrī Govinda enjoys with Rādhā and the *gopīs*, and the *sādhus* are always witnessing this,”

**Commentary:**

There are innumerable pastimes that Kṛṣṇa performs in Vraja. In the *nikuñja-kutīra* in Nidhuvāna, in Kuñja-kānane and in many other places throughout Vraja, *nitya-līlā* is always going on. *Nitya-līlā* means it is eternal. When the *sādhakas* are blessed with spiritual vision, they can witness all these pastimes that are happening even today. What is mentioned in the scriptures is just an insignificant fragment of those pastimes. The pastimes are endless and countless.

When Kuntī Devī started glorifying Kṛṣṇa in her *vandanā*, Maharishi Vedavyāsa noticed that there was a change in her mood towards Kṛṣṇa. In the beginning, her love for him was in *vātsalya-bhāva*, parental mood. Later, after she witnessed how Kṛṣṇa saved Parīkṣit Mahārāja in his mother Uttara's womb, Kuntī Devī's mood changed to *aiśvarya-bhāva*:

namasye puruṣaṁ tvādyam  
īśvaraṁ prakṛteḥ param  
alakṣyaṁ sarva-bhūtānāṁ  
antar bahir avasthitam

“Oh Kṛṣṇa, I offer my obeisances unto You because You are the original personality and are unaffected by the qualities of the material world. You are existing both within and without everything, yet You are invisible to all.”

māyā-javanikācchannam  
ajñādhokṣajam avyayam  
na lakṣyase mūḍha-dṛśā  
naṭo nātyadharo yathā

“Being beyond the range of limited sense perception, You are the eternally irreproachable factor covered by the curtain of deluding energy. You are invisible to the foolish observer, exactly as an actor dressed as a player is not recognized.”

tathā paramahamsānām  
munīnām amalātmanām  
bhakti-yoga-vidhānārtham  
katham paśyema hi striyaḥ

“You Yourself descend to propagate pure bhakti in the hearts of the advanced transcendentalists and philosophers who are purified by being able to discriminate between matter and spirit. How, then, can we women know You perfectly?” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.8.18-20)

She glorified Kṛṣṇa by saying, “I offer my *praṇāms* to you,” and Kṛṣṇa was very surprised, as he had never seen her in this mood. From the beginning, Kuntī Devī had always portrayed her love for him in the *vātsalya-bhāva* of Vraja. This was very rare, because only in Vṛndāvana, in Vraja, had he experienced such love in a parental mood. Outside Vraja, only Kuntī Devī displayed this *bhāva*. From childhood she took care of Kṛṣṇa along with her son Arjuna, as her own child. Now suddenly her *vātsalya-bhāva* changed and she started glorifying him. Kṛṣṇa tried to convince her to change her *aiśvaryā* mood back to her original *vātsalya-bhāva*, but it was to no avail. The change of her *bhāva* was so firmly fixed, that Kṛṣṇa could not do anything. He asked her why she was offering him *praṇāma*, “I am your son, and you must know that if an elder offers *praṇāma* to one who is younger, then it is inauspicious for the person receiving the *praṇāma*. Are you forsaking your love for me?” Kuntī Devī said, “I only realized your actual form today. All this time my eyes were blinded by a curtain of *māyā* that you placed not only before me, but in front of everyone else.” Finally, Kuntī Devī said, “Kṛṣṇa, I have just begun to realize a little bit of your *tattva*, your transcendental nature, and I am trying to reveal my realisations through this *vandanā*. You know, Kṛṣṇa, you did not appear for us. You appeared for your great saintly devotees, for the *ātmārāmas* and the *paramahāmsas*, who are *pūrṇa-kāma*. You appeared for them and not for an ordinary woman, like me. But Kṛṣṇa, even those for whom you have appeared, do not realize your true nature completely. Even Maharishi Vedavyāsa, whom everyone knows is a partial expansion of yours, does not know about your true nature. His descriptions about you in his writings disclose his lack of knowledge about you.”

Maharishi Vedavyāsa admitted this and said, “Yes, Devī, you are right. I could not realize even a drop of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities, which are as vast as an ocean. Whatever little I realized is not enough to describe even a single drop of that ocean of knowledge about his nature.” Maharishi Vedavyāsa, who appeared in this world for the purpose of revealing the knowledge about Kṛṣṇa to everyone, was unable to realize him fully. He admitted that he was able to realize only one drop of the ocean of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, and out of that one drop he could only reveal one fraction of that knowledge. If with just one fraction of a drop of the ocean of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, all the pure devotees have become maddened with divine love, what would happen if Maharishi Vedavyāsa were to describe cent percent of Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental nature? It is not possible for anyone to realize or fathom transcendental knowledge of Kṛṣṇa completely. Similarly, his pastimes are also transcendental and inconceivable. *kālākāla virāma nā hoy*, he is not observing any

considerations of time, place and circumstances to perform these pastimes. *Sādhū janā sadāi dekhaya*, only pure-hearted devotees have the vision to witness all these eternal pastimes that Śrī Govinda is playing with Rādhārāṇī and all her *gopīs*.

yadi vāñcha koto mane, vilāsite nidhuvane,  
rādhā-kṛṣṇa gopīkā sahite  
upāya dekhie tabe, anugata kore ebe,  
anaṅga mañjarī caraṇete (26)

“If you desire to see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enjoying pastimes with the *gopīs* in Nidhuvana, then follow in the footsteps of Anaṅga Mañjarī,”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura says that, if we want to witness how Kṛṣṇa is playing *rāsa-līlā* pastimes in Nidhuvana with Rādhārāṇī and all the other *gopīs*, there is no other way but to take shelter at the lotus feet of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Only if Anaṅga Mañjarī permits us to enter Nidhuvana, will we be able to see these nectarean pastimes.

So, *sādhakas*, please fix your mind and heart at the lotus feet of Anaṅga Mañjarī. She will take us to the lotus feet of Rādhārāṇī.

śrī vṛndādi vanadevī, priya kori bhāvo yadi,  
tube dekhī ei to vicāra  
lalitādi sakhī-gaṇa, yadi pāite hoy mana  
anaṅga mañjarī koro sāra (27)

“If I feel affection for Śrī Vṛndā and the Vanadevīs, and I want to attain the association of Lalitā and all the other *sakhīs*, then obviously I have to surrender to Anaṅga Mañjarī wholeheartedly.”

### Commentary:

The first and foremost advice of Rāmāi Ṭhākura is that we have to learn to love all the associates of Rādhā-Govinda, such as Śrī Vṛndā Devī and all the others. He has included every one of them. Vṛndā Devī is a Vanadevī (forest goddess, a sprite). She is the Īśvarī of Vṛndāvana. To enter her territory, we need her blessings. In the diagram of Yogapīṭha, we find her in the position of *dvāra-rakṣaka*, the gatekeeper or security guard (of the eastern gate). It is just like going through a security check before entering a

restricted territory. We have to be checked for forbidden dangerous items like ‘false ego’ (i.e. material ego). This is the most dangerous weapon. Envy comes next followed by pride and material attachment. The gatekeepers will examine us first to see if we have all these dangerous weapons in our possession. If we try to enter with all these forbidden qualities, the gatekeepers of Vṛndāvana will take them away. If we are caught with these dangerous weapons, we will be listed on the suspicious list and be scrutinized further. We will be observed all the time under the closed-circuit camera. Everyone inside will be watching us with a suspicious look. They will not accept us from their heart, and we will not feel comfortable in their presence. This is what will happen to us, if we try to enter there with impure consciousness. It is very important, that we create a good impression and strong relationship with everyone, especially with Vṛndā Devī and all the other gatekeepers, as they are the ones we have to first meet before we enter the *nikuñja-kutīra* garden. A good impression and approval from everyone is very important for us. After entering with their approval, we can then take shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Once she accepts us, no one else will examine us. We will be accepted by everyone, including Lalitā, Viśākhā and all the *sakhīs*. With the mercy and blessings of Anaṅga Mañjarī our entrance into *nikuñja-sevā* will be successful.

rāgera bhajana yei, niścaya jāniho ei,  
 niṣṭhā koro anaṅga mañjarī  
 jānibe rasera rīti, sakhī madhye hobe sthiti  
 sukhe pābe kiśora kiśorī (28)

“Those, who are performing *rāgānuga-bhajana*, should certainly know that surrender to Anaṅga Mañjarī is the only way; thus they can realize all the intricacies of *rasa* and be blissfully situated among the *sakhīs*, relishing the service of Kiśora-Kiśorī.”

### Commentary:

There are two types of *sādhana-bhajana*. The first is *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti*. Only after practising all the processes of *vaidhī-bhakti* very carefully with great dedication can we enter into the second type of *sādhana*, *rāgānuga-bhakti*. The stage of practising and following the rules and

regulations of *vaidhī-bhakti* is very important before we can proceed onto the practice of *rāgānuga-bhajan*.<sup>48</sup>

sādhane bhāviba jāhā siddha-dehe pāba tāhā  
rāga pathera ei se upāya

“Whatever form one contemplates during *sādhana*, that form he will attain at the stage of perfection. This is the method of *rāga-bhakti*. (PBC 54)

If we have ‘false ego’ and try to surpass the stage of *vaidhī-bhakti* and jump into *rāgānuga-bhajana*, we are bound to commit very grave offences. *Rāgānuga-bhajana* is not like a fruit that we can pluck from a tree, and it is not that just by “eating” it, *rāgānuga-bhakti* will spontaneously manifest in our heart. It does not come so simply. We must be very cautious and approach bhakti in a very humble mood. If Prankṛṣṇa Baba, a *siddha-mahā-puruṣa*, who is about one hundred years old, is saying, “I am still in the stage of *anartha-nivṛtti*,” then what is our position? We are not even in the stage of *śraddhā*. The first requirement to attain prema is *śraddhā*.

*Satām prasaṅgam mama vīrya-saṁvido* (“In *sādhū saṅga*, discussions of my pastimes are nectar for the ears and the heart.” SB 3.25.25), this *śraddhā* does not appear that easily. It will only come with the association of pure devotees and inner realizations through the practice of devotion.

In Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā, Narottama Dāsa reminds us, *kṛṣṇa-bhakta saṅga kari kṛṣṇa-bhakta aṅga heri śraddhānvita śravaṇa-kīrtana*. He says that first we have to associate with a Kṛṣṇa devotee, and then again, he repeats the same thing, *kṛṣṇa-bhakta aṅga heri* (“see the body of a *kṛṣṇa-bhakta*” PBC 18). This means association is not only the act of taking *darśan*. When we associate with a pure devotee, with a *siddha-mahatma*, his association and his *darśan* is not the same. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has stressed this point twice to caution us against the dangers of being judgmental of pure devotees’ external appearance. We will have to face serious consequences if we commit offences against them.

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<sup>48</sup> Not true. According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in *Rāga-Vartma-Candrikā*, these are two distinct paths from the very beginning of bhakti (and *rāgānuga* does not depend on first doing *vaidhī-bhakti*). In *Bhakti Sandarbha*, Jīva Goswāmī explains there are two distinct paths which he calls *vicāra pradana* and *ruci pradana*; they don’t overlap and *ruci pradana* does not depend on *vicāra pradana*.

When a *siddha-mahatma* is in some *bhāva*, the people around him laugh and tease him. They think he is crazy. This is a lack of *śraddhā*. If we have no respect for them, the feeling of love for Kṛṣṇa will not appear in our hearts. We have to be respectful to them and think that we are now in front of someone through whom we can attain *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. We have to first develop this *śraddhā*, and only then are we qualified to go in front of a *siddha-mahatma*. Otherwise, we will never be graced by their blessings. It is said, that in just one moment we can attain all *siddhis* by associating with a *mahāpuruṣa*. The only way one can attain *śraddhā* is by associating with pure devotees. By all means, we have to try to obtain causeless mercy from them.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura assures us, that after we attain *guru-kṛpā*, the easiest way to get entrance into the *nikuñja-kutīra* is to take shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī. Then, Lalitā, Viśākhā Devī and all the other *sakhīs* will accept us without any further examination.

First, we have to practice by following the instructions of Gurudeva and taking shelter of the *mahā-mantra* very sincerely. Every time we sing or chant the *mahā-mantra*, all impurities of the heart are cleansed by the *mahā-mantra's kṛpā*. By following this procedure, very soon our practicing stage will be over and we will enter into *rāgāmuga-bhajana* under the shelter of the lotus feet of Anaṅga Mañjarī.

*Rāgera bhajana yei, niścaya jāniho ei*, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has made this important fact very clear: Taking shelter of Anaṅga Mañjarī itself is enough to know the details of *rasa* and be perfectly situated in the service to Rādhā-Govinda with all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*. It is very simple, we do not need to be perfect with all qualities and talents. She will teach us everything and empower us with all necessary service qualities for the pleasure of Rādhā-Govinda. She will groom us in such a way, that we will make Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa smile at us at their first glance.

The first impression is very important. By their first glance if they do not smile, it means we have failed. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is assuring us that we need not fear failure. Anaṅga Mañjarī will prepare us to approach them well acquainted with all knowledge of how to please them in every way according to the *rītis*, all the rules and regulations of love.

yoto mañjarīra gaṇe, santoṣa hoibe mane  
 ihāte sandeha nāi māni  
 kṛṣṇa yāke stuti kori, ubhayete ādari  
 rāma śakti rādhāra vahinī (29)

“Once we are accepted by Anaṅga Mañjarī, all the other mañjarī will be very pleased with us. There is no doubt about this. Kṛṣṇa sings the glories of Anaṅga Mañjarī, who is Balarāma-śakti and Rādhā’s younger sister.”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Ṭhākura, taking shelter at the lotus feet of Mā Jāhnavā, is emphasizing the importance of Anaṅga Mañjarī and why she is so important and most powerful in our *bhajana* path. Once we are accepted by Anaṅga Mañjarī, all the other mañjarīs will be very happy to welcome us and make us a part of their big family. They all know that if Anaṅga Mañjarī has chosen someone, then she must be very perfect with all qualities. It is a credential by itself, just to be appointed by her. Anaṅga Mañjarī is adored by Kṛṣṇa just as he adores Rādhārāṇī, because she is non-different from Rādhārāṇī. *Rāma śakti rādhāra vahinī*, Rādhā’s sister is Balarāma-śakti, which means Mūla Saṅkarṣaṇa, Balarāma’s *śakti*.

śrīdāma agraja bhrāta, kīrtīda yāhāra mātā  
rādhāra anujā nāma sāje  
vāñchā kalpataru-mayī, sāksāte jāhnavā ei,  
gopīnātha vāmete virāje (30)

“Śrīdāma is her elder brother and Kīrtīda is her mother. She is well known as the younger sister of Rādhā. This wish-fulfilling Goddess is none other than Jāhnavā Mātā. Only she can fulfil all our desires for *mañjarī bhāva sevā*. She is always situated on the left side of Gopīnātha.”

### Commentary:

Our aim and goal in spiritual life is to attain the service of Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet, and it can only be fulfilled by Anaṅga and Rūpa Mañjarīs. Between these two, Anaṅga is more lenient. Rūpa expects one hundred percent perfection from us. If there is anything lacking in us, she will make us follow the guidance of our senior *mañjarīs* more perfectly, and only then will she engage us in Śrīmatī’s service. But, Anaṅga Mañjarī will accept us very easily, make us perfect and engage us in Rādhārāṇī’s *sevā*. All we have to do is to make our heart and mind perfectly tuned to a favourable mood towards Kṛṣṇa. Even if we are not so perfect in our service, Anaṅga Mañjarī will still accept us. She will say, “You just come. I will teach you



and train you; just watch me and follow me step by step and very soon you will be perfect.”

We are so fortunate that the most compassionate Anaṅga Mañjarī, who can allow us easy entrance to the service of Rādhārāṇī, has now appeared again, as Mā Jāhnavā. She is always situated on the left side of Gopīnātha. Whenever we take *darśan* of Gopīnātha, we can see Mā Jāhnavā on the left and Rādhārāṇī on the right side. In truth, they are both the same *tattva*. Only their forms and moods are different. Rādhārāṇī is in a beloved mood, and Mā Jāhnavā is in a service mood.

yāra daraśanāmṛta, tṛpta hoy sarva cite,  
heno vastu śrīmatī jāhnavā  
mo adhame koro dayā, deho prahhu pada-chāyā,  
tomā vinu āra āche kebā (31)

“Śrīmatī Jāhnavā is such, that once we take her *darśan*, all our senses will be fully satisfied. Oh Mā Jāhnavā, please be compassionate unto this wretched and fallen soul, and give me the shade of the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu. Other than you, who else do I have?”

### Commentary:

Rāmāi Thākura is guiding us as to how to show our eagerness and attachment in this way. “Hey Mā Jāhnavā! You are so merciful to everyone. After hearing about your compassionate nature, I am pleading with you, to please accept me and give me the shade of the lotus feet of Nitāi. Who else do I have other than you? Just thinking of you my heart is satiated. I will never leave your sight, even if you force me to. If I have to leave my life, it will only be at your lotus feet.”

During the stage of practice, we are always examined. First, Śrī Gurudeva will examine us. When we go to the devotees; they too will examine us for dedication and earnest desire. Our *iṣṭa-deva*, whom we worship, may sometimes examine us. Kṛṣṇa said in the Bhagavad-Gītā, “If I want to give someone something, I first take away everything – all his possessions. Then I wait and see whether after losing everything, he still has the same devotion for me or not? If I find that he is very sincere, then I will return everything a thousand-fold more.”

We have to approach our guides and Śrī Gurudeva with proper etiquette. We must be humble and be willing to be examined. The six Gosvāmīs have shown us this by their example. Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that

when we approach our guru, we have to approach him like an infant, like a beginner completely bereft of knowledge. We have to present our heart, like a blank sheet of paper to him. When he sees the innocence of an infant child in us, he will accept us and nourish us in every way, but if we go into the presence of Śrī Guru and start showing off our knowledge that we are great scholars, then this ego will block him from showering his grace upon us.

I am sharing my experience with my *śikṣā-guru*, Ācārya Nishit Kumar Gosvāmī. If he quoted a *śloka*, and if I happened to know it and started reciting it along with him, he would stop immediately and say, “Alright, you have gathered sufficient knowledge for today. We will continue tomorrow.” It was the same with my father. I acquired most of my knowledge from my father, Prabhupād Madan Gopal Gosvāmī, and my Ācārya Prabhupād Nishit Kumar Gosvāmī. From my grandmother, Gītā Mātā Gosvāmīnī, I heard the Rāmāyāna and Mahābharata. I learned sanskrit-grammar and scriptures with commentaries from my father and my Ācārya. It had happened many times, while my father was teaching me something and whenever I had opened my mouth to say something, he would immediately stop and say, “Oh, you know everything? Why have you come to me to learn then? You can learn everything by yourself.” We must be very careful in how we approach our guru, *siddha-mahatmas* and the Vaiṣṇavas. We must approach them like an innocent infant who does not know anything. We have to present ourselves like a blank page and let them write on it everything that we need to know about our *sādhana* and nourish us with all knowledge. What they write on our blank page will be perfect.

Even if there are many other teachers from whom we can receive this same knowledge, when we approach our teacher we must make him feel that he is indispensable. It must be with this mood, “I do not know anyone else. You are the source of all my knowledge.” If Śrī Guru were to ask me to go elsewhere, we must say, “No, I will not go anywhere else. I would rather die, than go anywhere else. I will offer my life at your lotus feet and nowhere else.” We must surrender with single-pointed dedication.

jāhnavā caraṇāśraya, kore yei mahāśaya,  
tara āmi hoiho kiṅkara  
tahahu pūribe āśa, vraja-bhūme hobe vāsa,  
ei mora mone nirantara (32)

“I am ready to sell myself to any saintly person who takes the shelter of Mā Jāhnavā’s lotus feet. Only then will my heart-felt desire to attain residence in Vrajabhūmi will be fulfilled.”

**Commentary:**

“My mind always desires to serve the servants of Mā Jāhnavā.” This is the way to attain bhakti and destroy our false ego and pride. If we say we are the servants of Kṛṣṇa or Rādhārāṇī, this too is false ego. Kṛṣṇa will reject us, like he rejected all the *vraja-gopīs* in Rāsa-līlā. All the *vraja-gopīs* were thinking they were the greatest and that is why Kṛṣṇa had accepted them. Although it is the truth, we should not think that way with pride and ego. We should always remain humble, like the Six Gosvāmīs. They are always reminding us to be cautious in our *bhajana*. The first ego is “I am a great Vaiṣṇava.” We have to be very careful with this kind of pride, because it is detrimental to our spiritual life.

nitāi jāhnavā pada, jini amṛtera hrada,  
aviśrānta bohe śata dhāre  
tāra eka kaṇā-mātra, sparśa hoile caritārtha,  
samyak varṇite kebā pāre (33)

“The lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnavā are like lakes which emit inexhaustible streams of nectar. Who can fully describe how blessed and blissful one becomes simply by touching one drop of this nectar?”

mui chāra manda mati, āra saṅga bhraṣṭa-mati,  
yat kiñcit korinu kīrtana  
nitāi caitanya prāṇa, āpāmare koro trāṇa,  
pāda padme loinu śaraṇa (34)

“I am a foolish and wretched rascal whose consciousness has been contaminated by bad association. Only by your mercy and blessings am I able to give a brief description of the fathomless ocean of your glories. I am taking shelter of your lotus feet, as you are dearest to Nitāi and Caitanya.”

**Commentary:**

Here, Rāmāi Ṭhākura is cautioning us about what bad association can do to our consciousness. Once our consciousness is destroyed, then we

have to depend on guru and pure Vaiṣṇavas to redeem us and bring us back onto the right path.

“O Mā Jāhnavā, only by your mercy and blessings am I able to give a brief description of the fathomless ocean of your glories. I know that what I have mentioned is not even a drop from that ocean. From the lotus feet of both you and Śrī Nitāi, a stream of nectarean mercy continuously flows, but unfortunately I cannot realize it. My misfortune is that I am deprived of tasting that *amṛta* because of my *manda-mati* (bad consciousness) and *manda-buddhi* (degraded intelligence).”

“You are not only lovingly attached to Śrī Nitāi, but also to Śrī Gaura Sundara. You are dear to both of them. If you are pleased with me, then Śrī Nitāi and Śrī Gaura will certainly be merciful to me. Then, inevitably, the blessings of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will soon be waiting for me.”

If we are attached to the worship of Nitāi and Gaurāṅga, but have no attraction for the worship of Rādhā-Govinda, still it is possible to get entrance into the Vṛndāvana *yogapīṭha-sevā* of Rādhā-Govinda. This is mentioned in the scriptures of the Six Gosvāmīs. Once we get the blessings of Śrī Nityānanda, they are sufficient for us to get the mercy of Gaurasundara and that will automatically enable us to enter the Vṛndāvana Yogapīṭha.

In our *mañjarī-svarūpa-sādhana* given by Śrī Gurudeva, we must first go through the Navadvīpa Yogapīṭha before we enter the Vṛndāvana Yogapīṭha. It is not possible to enter directly to the Vṛndāvana Yogapīṭha. This is the correct process. The most important part of our *bhajana* is to get the blessings of Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, which is only possible through the association of their devotees. Once we obtain the visa from them, then we are eligible for entry there in the company of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. When we meditate on *navadvīpa-līlā*, we have to wait until Mahāprabhu enters into his *vraja-līlā*, and then we follow suit.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is reminding us, how important it is to have the mercy of Nitāi and Gaurāṅga. Without them there is no hope for us to be showered with *ahaituki-kṛpā*, causeless mercy. It is our great good fortune that they came to distribute that which is impossible for us to attain directly from Rādhā and Govinda. Only they can shower us with such mercy.

Even though it is mentioned, that Kṛṣṇa is distributing his causeless mercy, it is not available to everyone since he only showers that mercy upon his very near and dear devotees, who are already in a pure stage of consciousness. He is unwilling to reveal his confidential pastimes or his *aiśvarya*, his opulence, to everyone. He even cautioned Arjuna in the

Bhagavad-Gītā not to reveal his true nature to anyone who does not have faith in him.

If Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu were to follow this instruction of Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, then none of us would be qualified to get even a glimpse of his prema and *tattva*. When Nitāicāṇḍ was preaching to the general people, he distributed it without any discrimination, even to great sinners and offenders such as Jagai and Madai. Even after they beat him physically, Nitāicāṇḍ forgave them and gave them Harināma.

Because of the compassion of such a benevolent incarnation, who came to deliver all *jīvas*, not only human beings, but all living entities can have the great hope of being able to attain their ultimate destination regardless of any disqualifications. Śrīman Mahāprabhu requested Nitāicāṇḍ, *nayane dekhibe jane loibe madhura kṛṣṇa nāma*, whoever you meet, you must give them sweet Harināma.

If we want to meet anyone who has a very high position in society, the easiest way to meet him is to approach those, who are very close to him and try to please them. If he is a big official, we will try to get into the good books of his secretary or anyone who is closely related to him and in this way we can get access to him very easily. In the same manner, the simplest and easiest way to attain Nitāi and Gaurāṅga is through Mā Jāhnavā. Once we get her mercy, both Nitāi and Gaura are bound to accept us. Then it will not be considered their causeless mercy, but their mercy with a cause. Because we are recipients of Mā Jāhnavā's mercy, they are compelled to accept us. This is a simple and effective way to gain entry, and it is only available for the *kali-yuga-jīvas*. Rāmāi Ṭhākura humbly affirms this, *āpāmare koro trāṇa, pāda padme loinu śaraṇa*, I am taking shelter of your lotus feet, as you are most compassionate to all *jīvas*. Without considering their qualifications, you accept everyone.

mad īśvarī pada bhāvi, nāmnā śrī lalitā devī,  
tāra kṛpāya ye hoy smarāṇa  
dṛṣa vṇḍāvana dāsa, tāra pāda-padma āśa,  
dhūli koroṇ mastaka bhūṣana (35)

“Remembering the mercy of my Īśvarī, Śrī Lalitā Devī, I yearn for the lotus-feet of Śrī Vṇḍāvana Dāsa by adorning my head with their dust.”

**Commentary:**

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is paying his respects and honouring everyone, first to his group leader, Śrī Lalitā Devī, and then to Ṭhākura Vṛndāvana Candra Dāsa, whom he considers his *śikṣā* guru.

It is not an easy task to relate the biography of Śrī Caitanya Avatāra, as he came in a covered form, as a hidden *avatāra*, *kalau pracchanna avatāra*. In Dvāpara-yuga, Kṛṣṇa's pastimes were all open. It was a straight forward description, but when something is covered, we have to start meditating or enquire from those who have realized its truth. Śrī Caitanya's identity was hidden not only by his complexion, but also by his mood. *Rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitaṁ naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam* (Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Ādi līlā 1.5). *Dyuti* means bodily effulgence. It was not that he was covered only by a bodily effulgence, but he even changed his mood. He was covered by the mood of Rādhārāṇī, so how is it possible to recognise him as Kṛṣṇa? It is very difficult to describe a male form covered with the mood of a female. Maharishi Vedavyāsa knew the only way to understand this hidden avatāra was to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa's close associates, and not only his friends, or his parents, or his beloved *sakhīs* or his servants. He knew that he could only discover these truths by associating with all the living entities in Vraja, including the plants, fruits, trees, flowers and the dust of Vraja – as they are all very powerful. In the scriptures it is mentioned, *vraja-vasa – govinda-sevā*, staying in Vraja is itself considered Govinda-sevā. Therefore, we have to fix our mind in Vraja.

ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam  
 ramyā kācid upāsanā vraja-vadhū-vargeṇā yā kalpitā  
 śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam amalam premā pum-artho mahān  
 śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ

“Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is our only worshipable object. In the same way that He is worshipable, so is His transcendental abode, Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma. The mood in which the young brides of Vraja (the *gopīs*, especially Śrīmatī Rādhikā) worship Him is the highest perfectional form of love of God. Śrīmad Bhāgavatam alone is the immaculate scriptural evidence of this (*śabda-pramāṇa*) and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the supreme objective of life (the fifth and highest goal of human life – beyond mundane religiosity, accumulation of wealth, sense gratification and impersonal liberation). This is the teaching of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇī*). We hold this

conclusion (*siddhānta*) in supreme regard and have no inclination for any other conclusions.” (Caitanya-mata-mañjusā, Śrīla Śrīnāth Paṇḍita)

We must always remember that our *iṣṭa*, the worshipable Lord, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa the son of Nanda Maharaja, and not the son of Vasudeva. He is not the Lord of Mathura, Dwārakā, Kurukṣetra or Hastinapur. We have to focus our mind on Kṛṣṇa, who is the son of Nanda Maharaja, and who is a cowherd boy always playing in Vraja. He is covered by the dust of Vṛndāvana and is decorated with forest flowers and leaves. He plays with animals, with the cowherd boys and, above all, with the *gopīs* of Vraja. *Tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam*, we have to live in that Vṛndāvana Dhāma.

In Rāya Ramānanda Saṁvād, Mahāprabhu asked, '*sarva tyaji' jīvera kartavya kāhān vāsa?*' "After renouncing everything, where should one reside? Ramānanda Ray replied, '*vraja-bhūmi vṛndāvana yāhān līlā-rāsa*' After renouncing everything one should reside in Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa performs his *līlā-rāsa*." (CC Madhya 8.254). It is our duty to stay and lose our mind and heart in Vṛndāvana. Just staying in Vraja is considered worship of Kṛṣṇa. When we stay in Vraja, whatever we eat is *prasād* and whatever we drink is *caranāmṛta*. When we shower with tap water, it is like taking a bath in Rādhā-kuṇḍa or Yamunā water. This is not an exaggeration. All the water in Vraja are considered holy water. Even if food is touched by a dog's mouth, it is considered Vaiṣṇava-prasād. If someone is born in Vraja, even in the form of a dog, we must see them as a close associate of Kṛṣṇa. They are more fortunate than us, who have taken birth in the human body out of Vraja.

In Upadeśāmṛta, Rūpa Goswāmī Gosvāmīpāda states:

kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta  
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īśam  
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-  
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

“We should mentally honour the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One should offer *praṇāms* to the devotee who is adorned with tilak and kanti-mālā, has accepted *dīkṣā* and is engaged in worshipping the deity. One should associate and faithfully serve the pure devotees, who are advanced in unalloyed devotional service and whose hearts are completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others.” (Śrī Upadeśāmṛta 5)

In Kali-yuga, Vedavyāsa, taking the name Vṛndāvana Dāsa, bows his head to all moving and non-moving living entities in Vṛndāvana.<sup>49</sup> He knows, they are all close associates of Gaurasundara, who is Kṛṣṇa, and they can reveal his *tattva*.

śrī caitanya nityānanda, śrī gaṅga śrī vīracandra,  
 śrī advaita gaura bhakta-gaṇa  
 tomā sabhāra śrī caraṇa, hauk mora prāṇa dhana,  
 sei mora bhajana smaraṇa (36)

"I worship the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya, Śrī Nityānanda, Gaṅga Mātā Goswāmīnī, Śrī Vīracandra. Śrī Advaita and all the devotees of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. May your lotus feet be the treasure of my heart and the object of my *bhajana-smaraṇa*."

ei bhikṣā mora tare, deho prahhu avicāre,  
 mo patite āra keho nāi  
 viṣama madete andha, ghucāo prabhu bhava bandha,  
 nitāi caitanya dui bhāi (37)

"Oh Prabhu! Without further consideration, please bestow these alms that I beg from You. There no one more fallen than me! I am blinded by sense pleasure and trapped in material existence. Oh two brothers, Nitāi and Caitanya, I am begging you, please redeem me from this trap of material bondage "

### Commentary:

Our *sādhana* begins by a show of emotions through words. In the beginning, we may not feel connected in the heart, but we have to try and express our humble plea in words. We have to continue this acting until one day by their mercy, it will manifest in the heart.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura laments that his eyes are blinded by material attachments and this creates an obstacle preventing vision of the Lord and his pastimes. Śrī Rādhā-Govinda are playing their pastimes eternally here, but we cannot see them, because we are blinded by our material attachments. *Siddha-mahatma* devotees, like Vamśi Dāsa Baba and Gaura Kiśora Dāsa

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<sup>49</sup> The Vṛndāvana Dāsa mentioned in śloka 35 above is not the Vṛndāvana Dāsa, composer of Caitanya Bhagavata, who is considered to be a second Vedavyāsa.



Baba were able to see Nitāi and Gaura dancing along with devotees in Saṅkīrtana. They were able to see this because their eyes were not blinded by material coverings. How can we open our eyes to see this vision of the pastimes?

ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

“I was blinded by the darkness of ignorance but Śrī Gurudev has anointed my eyes with spiritual knowledge and gave me divine vision. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.” (Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā 1)

Śrī Gurudeva will open our eyes, which are blinded by the darkness of ignorance. When he sees the strong desire in our heart to see the pastimes, he will hold our hand and take us there. If somebody is drowning in a river, no one will notice, but if he shouts for help, then someone will come to save him from drowning. Now we are happily swimming in the *bhāva-sindhu*, the ocean of material sense enjoyment, and that is why Gurudeva is not jumping in to pull us out.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is praying again and again to Nitāi and Gaurāṅga to bestow their mercy upon him, and he is teaching us how to surrender by praying in humility. Rāmāi Ṭhākura is ending the narration of his Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā with some final prayers to Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī.



## Atha Samprārthanā (Final Prayers)

anaṅga mañjarī dvani, krpā-dṛṣṭe cāho tumi,  
 purāo mora mano ahhilāṣa  
 loho more vraja pure, janma korāo gopa ghare,  
 gopa saṅge deho mora vāsa (38)

“Oh Anaṅga Mañjarī, please shower me with your merciful glance and fulfil my heart's desire to be born as a daughter of a *gopa*. Take me there to Vraja and allow me to be a *vraja-vāsi gopī*.”

śuno mora dainya nivedana,  
 nija dāsī gaṇanāya, āmāke gaṇibe tāya  
 tabe mora saphala jīvana (39)

“Please hear my humble prayers and allow me to be your maidservant. Only then can I consider my life successful.”

ei dehera kriya yoto, sab hauk anya mata  
 koro more gopera jhiyari  
 gopa bālakera saṅge, pariṇaya hohe raṅge  
 śuno prāṇa anaṅga mañjarī (40)

“Please hear me, O Anaṅga Mañjarī, you are my life and soul! Let all my bodily activities become spiritual. Please let me be born as the daughter of a cowherd, and let me happily marry a cowherd boy.”

### Commentary:

Why is Rāmāi Ṭhākura emphasizing marriage to a *gopa*? Why does he want to be married and not remain an unmarried girl? This is to make it clear that our role, as a *mañjarī* in *vraja-līlā* is in the mood of *parakīya-bhāva*. We have to serve Rādhā-Govinda in *parakīya-bhāva*.

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is stressing this point, that the *mañjarīs* do not have a personal desire to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa separately without Rādhārāṇī. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa pastimes in the *nikuñja-kuṭīra* are enacted in *parakīya-bhāva*. So the *mañjarīs* serving them have to be married to be able to feel this mood and serve them in the same *parakīya-bhāva*.

yogapīṭha ṣaṭ koṇe, ratna vedī simhāsane,  
tumi āra kiśora kiśorī  
tuvā anuyata hoiyā, tuyā dāsī saṅge roiyā  
sevi niti hoiyā ājñākārī (41)

“O Anaṅga Mañjarī! When Kiśora and Kiśorī are seated on the jewelled throne in the Yogapīṭha, please allow me to be there in the company of your maidservants. I will obey all your instructions and perform all the services that you desire in the company of your *dāsīs*.”

kabhu kuñja saṁskāra, kabhu vastra alaṅkāra  
kahhu koroṇ cāmara vyajana  
kabhu suvāsita jale, snāna korāo kutūhole  
kahhu kori caraṇa sevana (42)

“When will the day come, when I will be able to perform all the service duties for Kiśora Kiśorī? Sometimes I will clean the *kuñja*, sometimes I will arrange the dresses and ornaments, and sometimes, seeing that they are perspiring from heat, I will fan them with a *cāmara* to cool them. Sometimes I will spray them with scented water and sometimes I will massage their lotus feet when they are taking rest.”

heno daśā kobe hohe, tāmbūla yogābo kobe  
donhākāra se cānda vadane  
heno sādha hoy mana, korāo aṅge sulepana  
sauyandha kumkuma candane (43)

“When will I be able to offer betel leaves with betel nuts and spices to both Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes the desire manifests in my heart to anoint their bodies, which are softer than butter, with fragrant *kuṅkuma* and sandalwood pulp. That day I will feel my life is successful.”

Rāmāi Ṭhākura is wishing for the day, when he can offer these services in his *mañjarī svarūpa* (Ratna Mañjarī).

ei sab sevā bhāi, śrī guru prasāde pai  
guru-pade dṛḍha koro āśa  
anaṅga mañjarī dhyāna, nirantara koro gāna  
yadi vrajapure cāho vāsa (44)

“All these services are attained by the grace of Śrī Guru. Therefore, aspire for His mercy by firmly holding on to his lotus feet. Always meditate on Anaṅga Mañjarī and sing her glories if you want to live in Vraja-Dhāma.”

**Commentary:**

If we can live in Vraja with our mind and heart, then Gurudeva will engage us in *nikuñja-sevā*. Only Śrī Gurudeva can engage us. Always pray at the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva: “Please teach me and prepare me to perform the *sevā* of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. May my mind always be focused on the meditation of Anaṅga Mañjarī.” Śrī Gurudeva is the representative of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, Anaṅga Mañjarī and all their worshipable forms. He is their nearest and dearest servitor. Whatever message we relay to him, he will deliver to them.

nityānanda prabhu pāda, mūlāśraya sampada  
yadī kṛpā koreṇa nitāi  
nahe paḍi bhava phāṇśe, kāṇde rāmacandra dāse,  
mo patitera āra keho nāi (45)

“The lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu are my only wealth. If Nitāi bestows His causeless mercy upon me, then I will be freed from this material existence. Rāmacandra Dāsa laments: “There is no one more fallen than me!”

**Commentary:**

In this last verse, Rāmāi Ṭhākura has revealed the highest and most important, sublime truth: Everything he narrated so far will only manifest if we get the blessings of Nityānanda Prabhu. Nitāicāṇḍ has promised us:

yatheṣṭaṁ re bhrātaḥ! kuru hari-hari-dhvānam anīṣaṁ  
tato vaḥ saṁsārāmbudhi-taraṇa-dāyo mayi laget  
idaṁ bāhu-sphoṭair aṭati raṭayan yaḥ pratigṛhaṁ  
bhaje nityānandaṁ bhajana-taru-kandaṁ niravadhi (5)

“I perpetually worship Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, the root of the *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* tree, who wandering around Bengal, approached the door of every home, and with upraised arms exclaimed, “O Brothers! Without inhibition all of you together, continuously chant Śrī Harināma. If you do so, I will take the

responsibility to deliver you from the ocean of material existence.” (Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Nityānandāṣṭakam 5)

Nitāicāṇḍ promises us that if we chant the *mahā-mantra* incessantly, we do not have to do anything else. Patting his left shoulder with his right hand and roaring loudly he vowed, “I promise you I will take you across this ocean of *samsara*. Only I can do this, no one else.”

We have great hope, although we are very fallen and weak in our dedication and devotion. We may be just an empty vessel, but if we have Pāgal Doyāl Nitāi, then we have everything. It is very easy to please someone who is crazy like Nitāi as he is always madly absorbed in prema.

To please Mahāprabhu is very difficult, because he is very strict, but Pāgal Nitāi is very easily satisfied. Amongst all the *devatas*, the easiest to please is Lord Śiva. He can be easily satisfied just by offering him one *bilva-patra* or even by one drop of water. To please Nitāi, all we need to do is to chant the *mahā-mantra* and shout and call out for him, “Joy Nitāi!”

If we chant with a very sincere heart, Nitāi will appear in front of us and hold our hand. We are extremely fortunate that we have Pāgal Doyāl Nitāi. We can nurture the hope that he will do everything for us. He has taken responsibility for all the *jīvas* of Kali-yuga. He has given us a very simple method to follow. We only have to chant and perform all our other duties. Even the other duties will be taken care of by Nitāi, if we chant sincerely and surrender to him.

With this last, most important advice, Rāmāi Ṭhākura completes his description of Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā.

Thus ends Śrīla Rāmacandra Gosvāmī’s Śrī Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā.

## Biography of Śrī Rāmāi Ṭhākura

(aka Śrīla Rāmacandra Goswāmī)

Śrī Rāmacandra Goswāmī is the very same Rāmāi Ṭhākura, the adopted son of Jāhnavā Mātā and her most intimate associate. Śrī Devakīnandana Dāsa glorifies him in his Vaiṣṇava Vandana:

jāhnavāra priya vandō rāmāi gosāi  
ye ānila gauḍa-deśe kṇāi balāi  
yaiche vīrabhadra jāni taiche śrī rāmāi  
jāhnavā-mātāra ājñā, ithe āna nāi

“I praise Rāmāi Gosāi, who brought Kṇāi and Balāi, the deities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Bengal. It was the statement of Jāhnavā Mātā herself that Śrī Rāmāi is just as glorious as Śrī Vīrabhadra (Vīracandra); there is no doubt about this.”

Śrīla Rāmacandra Goswāmī (Rāmāi Ṭhākura) was born in 1533 (1455 Śaka). He was the grandson of Vamśivadana Ṭhākura. To understand who Rāmāi Ṭhākura is, we must first know something about Vamśivadana Ṭhākura, since Rāmāi is Vamśivadana himself taking birth again as his own grandson. Vamśivadana was the incarnation of the flute, the Vamśi of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Hence, Muralī Vilāsa begins with this *maṅgalācaraṇa*:

jagad-ākaraṣiṇī-śaktir nitya-prema-svarūpiṇī  
tvaṁ vamaśī-vadanānanda vande tvā’ham jagad-guro  
śrī-caitanya-priyatamas tadiya-*prema*-vigrahaḥ  
vande tac-caraṇāmbhoja makaranda-pipāsayā

“The Vamśi is Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-prema-svarūpiṇī*, the eternal manifestation of his *prema-svarūpa* and her divine *śakti* produces a melodious vibration that enchants the whole universe. She has now appeared as Vamśivadana, the Jagat Guru and Gaurāṅga’s dearest *parśada*, close associate. Therefore, my heart yearns to relish the ambrosial nectar that comes from serving his lotus feet.”

According to Muralī Vilāsa, which was written by Rāmāi Ṭhākura's nephew and disciple Rājavallabha Goswāmī, Vamśivadana Ṭhākura had two sons. One was Caitanya Dāsa and the other was Nityānanda Dāsa. On his death-bed Vamśivadana's daughter-in-law, Caitanya Dāsa's wife, was weeping pathetically. To pacify her, Vamśivadana gave her a blessing and told her that he would return as her son in order to spread devotion for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Bengal.

This is the same Vamśivadana who carved Viṣṇu Priya's original Dhāmeśvar Mahāprabhu deity. After taking *sannyasa*, Mahāprabhu came to Viṣṇu Priya in a dream and told her that very soon the Neem tree at his birth-place will die, and she should ask Vamśivadana to carve a deity of Him from that Neem wood. Thereafter, she should spend her life worshiping that deity. Vamśivadana was a very talented sculptor and his signature is there at the bottom of the original deity. He was the disciple and personal servant of Viṣṇu Priya after Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa*, and had a very strong bond of affection with Śacī Mātā and Viṣṇu Priya.

One day Jāhnavā Mātā came to visit Caitanya Dāsa and his wife and told them: "You will have two great sons. May I request that after the second son is born you would kindly offer the first one to me?"

They both considered Jāhnavā Mātā's proposal and agreed since they had faith that she is Nityānanda Prabhu's *śakti*. By her grace, soon Rāmāi was born. He was extraordinarily beautiful to behold. His lustre resembled molten gold and his transcendental body was universally captivating. On the auspicious *āvirbhāva* birthday of Rāmāi Ṭhākura, Jāhnavā Mātā along with Viṣṇu Priya and Sītā Ṭhākurānī all came to bless him. Vasudhā Mātā also came along carrying the newly born Vīracandra Prabhu in her arms.

When Rāmāi became a youth, his younger brother Sacinandana was born. Hence Jāhnavā Mātā soon returned to remind Caitanya Dāsa and his wife about their promise. However, owing to their great attachment for Rāmāi, it was difficult for them to give him up. Then Viṣṇu Priya came to pacify them and helped them to surrender him to Jāhnavā Mātā.

Jāhnavā Mātā then took Rāmāi to Khardaha, where he was welcomed by Vīracandra Prabhu with a large procession. He immediately went to pay his *praṇāms* to Vasudhā Mātā and Ganga Mātā Goswāmīnī. Jāhnavā Mātā then initiated Rāmāi and from then on Rāmāi fully surrendered himself to her lotus feet, saying, "You are Gaurāṅga's Vallabha, the eternal consort and Jagat Īśvarī. My only desire is to be eternally the servant of your servants."



Later Rāmāi Ṭhākura travelled with Jāhnavā Mātā to Vraja Dhāma and spent some time there with her. After he witnessed her spectacular disappearance from this phenomenal world by merging into the deity form of Anaṅga Mañjarī in Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha temple in Kāmyavan, she came to him in a dream and ordered him to return to Gauḍa Deśa. Astonishingly, around the same time Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma also came to him in a dream, asking him to serve them. Soon after that, a miracle happened. One day, while he was having his morning bath in the Yamunā, to his amazement two beautiful *darumaya-murtis*, wooden deities, of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma came floating into his hands.

As ordered by Jāhnavā Mātā, he soon returned to Gauḍa Deśa with the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma deities and established them as Kanāi and Balāi in his *śrīpat*, *bhajana-sthalī*, in Baghnapura village, which is located a few kilometres south of Navadvīpa. This village received the name Baghnapura from a miraculous event, wherein Rāmacandra Goswāmī, by chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa pacified a tiger that was troubling the area. This village is still the home of Rāmacandra Goswāmī's descendants. Though he never married, his lineage is carried on through his nephew Rājavallabha Goswāmī. Vipin Bihārī Goswāmī and his illustrious disciple Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura belong to this lineage, called the Bhagnapura line.

This account is based on a chapter from Muralī Vilāsa by Rājavallabha Goswāmī. It was translated by Gadādhara Prāṇa and published in his book *The Untold Story of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura*. It was also published in Jagadānanda's blog (used with permission).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> <http://jagadanandadas.blogspot.com/2019/03/another-side-of-bhaktivinoda-13-glories.html>

## Mañjarī-bhāva – A Re-evaluation

The five groups of *gopīs* are: *sakhīs*, *nitya-sakhīs*, *prāṇa-sakhīs*, *priya-sakhīs* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* (‘*priya-narma sakhīs*’ in Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s usage)<sup>51</sup> These *sakhīs* are graded according to increasing intensity of prema for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The *parama-prstha-sakhīs* have the greatest love, the *sakhīs* and *nitya-sakhīs* have the least love for the Divine Couple. These five groups may be divided into three categories: *kṛṣṇa-snehādhika*, *rādhā-snehādhika*, and *sama-sneha* (equal love for both). The lowest category of *sakhīs* are *kṛṣṇa-snehādhika*. *Nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are *rādhā-snehādhika*, *priya-sakhīs* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are *sama-sneha*, which implies that the *sama-sneha sakhīs* have more love for Rādhā than the *rādhā-snehādhika sakhīs*.

These five groups can also be split into two categories: leaders and followers. *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are leaders, *priya-sakhīs* are their followers in the *sama-sneha* category. *Prāṇa-sakhīs* are the leaders and *nitya-sakhīs* are the followers in the *rādhā-snehādhika* category. The *sakhīs* (*kṛṣṇa-snehādhika*) have no followers as it would violate the principles of *rāgānugā-bhakti*. There is a mention of another category of *kṛṣṇa-snehādhika* by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura called *snigdha-sakhīs* (but no further information available). The leaders’ category (*parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs*) is an eternal position. The followers’ position is attainable by *rāgānugā-bhakti* (i.e., by *sādhakas*). However, there are also *nitya-pārṣada* (eternal associates) in the followers’ category (*priya-sakhīs* and *nitya-sakhīs*).

It is also mentioned that the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are the best among the *priya-sakhīs*. Similarly, the *prāṇa-sakhīs* are the best among the *nitya-sakhīs*. The above description is a summary of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s commentary on Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 8.137.

Some *priya-sakhīs* are *bhakti-siddha* (i.e., *sādhana-siddha*).<sup>52</sup> Therefore the idea that only the position of ‘*mañjarīs*’ (i.e., *nitya-sakhīs*) is open for *jīvas* has to be rejected. In a sense, *rāgānuga sādhakas* can attain the position of

<sup>51</sup> VCT’s commentary on Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 8.137

<sup>52</sup> Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 1.234

either *nitya-sakhīs* or *priya-sakhīs* (but not the position of *prāṇa-sakhīs* or *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*). The problem lies in the confusion inherent in the current usage of the term ‘*mañjarī*.’ The terms ‘*mañjarīs*’ and ‘*sakhīs*’ are interchangeable and can be applied equally to any *gopī* in the three categories of *nitya-sakhī*, *prāṇa-sakhī*, and *priya-sakhī*. The terms ‘*mañjarī*’, ‘*kiṅkarī*’ and ‘*sahacarī*’ are, in any case, poetic (*sahitic*) terms and should not be applied to Rūpa Goswāmī’s definitions in *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* and *Ujjvala-Nīlamanī* or used in any discussion of *siddhānta*.

It was previously stated that the *prāṇa-sakhīs* is an eternal position. This position is occupied by the *devīs* of *svarga* who are the *aṁśa* of the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*, and who attained this position by doing *sādhana-bhakti*. Therefore, *prama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are mostly the same *pārśadas* with different names and moods.<sup>53</sup>

The *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are divided into two categories, *variṣṭha-sakhīs* and *vara-sakhīs*, the former are older and include the *aṣṭha-sakhīs* of Rādhā; the latter (the eight *vara-sakhīs*) are around 12 years old and include Anaṅga Mañjarī.<sup>54</sup>

The category of *mañjarīs* is mentioned as a separate category in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā, even though the above mentioned three categories of *sakhīs* (apart from the *sakhī* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī* categories ) include *mañjarīs*.<sup>55</sup> Those *mañjarīs* listed separately are seen to have *sāṅkula rati* (mixed *rati*) of *saksat-upabhogātmaka* and *tad-anumodanātmaka*.<sup>56</sup> These *mañjarīs* manifest in separate *prakāśas* as can be found in Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā where these *mañjarīs* (Rūpa, Rati, Rasa, Maṇi, and Guṇa) are acting as *yūtheśvarīs* indicating their *nāyikā* nature, contrary to their mood and behavior in most other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava texts like Vilāpa-Kusumāñjali.

Such *mañjarīs* are also included in the same category with Anaṅga Mañjarī but in a supporting role, which implies that *sakhīs* lower than them see them as *sama-sakhīs*, but they themselves see Anaṅga Mañjarī as *apekṣika-adhika sakhī*.<sup>57</sup> This is also in line with the conception of Anaṅga

<sup>53</sup> Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 3.52-52

<sup>54</sup> Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 1.76-98

<sup>55</sup> Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 2.181-184.

<sup>56</sup> Prīti Sandarbha, Anu 365. These are somewhat equivalent to the more commonly used terms *sambhogecchāmayī* and *tat-tad bhavecchā-mayī*.

<sup>57</sup> Anaṅga Mañjarī Samputikā 3.30

Mañjarī Samputikā where Balarāma has a mixture of all the *rasas* but can manifest *śṛīṅāra rasa* only through the *prakāśa* of Anaṅga Mañjarī. As there exists some differences in the attractiveness of *sama-sneha* and *rādhikā-snehādhika sakhīs*, the *mañjarīs* would have to manifest two separate *prakāśas*.<sup>58</sup>

The above explanation pertains to a special category of *mañjarīs* as in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā. It is important to know clearly what the term ‘*mañjarī*’ actually means. We can get a clue from Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā where both *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are called by the same term, *narma-sakhīs*.<sup>59</sup> Here, all the *sakhīs* are addressed by the name *narma-sakhīs* even though the five categories are distinctive and prominent. Those *gopīs* who can fit in multiple categories are just addressed by the name *narma-sakhīs* and not by specific group designation.

We see that Viśvanātha Cakravartī follows the line of Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura and addresses the *priya-sakhīs*, *prāṇa-sakhīs* and *nitya-sakhīs* collectively as *mañjarīs*. Viśvanātha shows that *sakhīs* like Kandarpa Sundarī (a *priya-sakhī*), Candrarekha (a *prāṇa-sakhī*), and others are addressed as *mañjarīs*.<sup>60</sup> But to indicate the special position of the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*, Viśvanātha gives them the name *priya-narman-sakhīs* to show their *prema-saubhagya* and their exalted status vis a vis all other *sakhīs*. (Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura calls them *priya-preṣṭha sakhīs*).

The conclusion is that ‘*sakhīs*’ and ‘*mañjarīs*’ are not two separate and distinct categories; rather, these two terms overlap and are often used interchangeably. Therefore, the currently popular dichotomy made between *nāyikā sakhīs* and ‘*mañjarīs*’ is inaccurate.

When the term ‘*mañjarī*’ is popularly used nowadays in most discussions, it actually means *nitya-sakhīs*, because only the *nitya-sakhīs* have pure *tad-anumodanātmaka* (*tat-tad-bhāvecchā-mayī*). When someone says that Anaṅga Mañjarī is a ‘*mañjarī*’, what they actually mean is that she is a *nitya-sakhī*. In the light of the evidence presented above, Anaṅga Mañjarī cannot

<sup>58</sup> Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 3.52 & 8.84, VCT commentary.

<sup>59</sup> Prema-Bhakti-Candrikā 49-51

<sup>60</sup> Gaura-gaṇa-svarūpa-tattva-candrikā 93, 101, 120. See also Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 2.176-180

possibly be a *nitya-sakhī* (*‘mañjarī’* in Premgopal Gosvāmī’s usage), because she is a *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī* and a *yūtheśvarī*.<sup>61</sup> She is a *nāyikā-sakhī* and has *kānta-bhāva*. She is *Īśvarī tattva* and cannot possibly be a *nitya-sakhī* at the same time. There is no *pramāṇa* anywhere (not even in Anaṅga Mañjarī Sampuṭikā) to support the conclusion that Anaṅga Mañjarī is a so-called *‘mañjarī’*<sup>62</sup> (i.e., *nitya-sakhī*).

It is true to say that Anaṅga Mañjarī has a mixture of two moods, both *sākṣāt upabhogātmaka* (*sambhogeccā-mayī*) and *tad-anumodanātmaka* (*tat-tad-bhāvecchā-mayī*) *bhāvas*, but that is common to most other *sakhīs* and not specific to Anaṅga Mañjarī. Put simply, to say that she is a *‘mañjarī’*, is wrong and confusing. To assert, as Premgopal Gosvāmī does in his commentary, that unless we follow Anaṅga Mañjarī in *‘mañjarī-bhāva’* we cannot gain entrance into Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s *mādhurya* pastimes in Vraja – is at best far-fetched and at worst a misconception. While this may be the speaker’s *bhāva* and an expression of his *parivar niṣṭha*, it is not supported by any *śāstric pramāṇa*.

If anything, if we follow Anaṅga Mañjarī in our *bhajana*, we will attain the position of a *priya sakhī* in *kānta-bhāva* (not such a bad idea!). After all, *kānta-bhāva* is the main theme of the Rāsa-Pañcādhyāyī which is the essence of the Bhāgavatam and the Bhāgavatam is the primary *pramāṇa* of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

It is a bit strange that while *‘mañjarī-bhāva’* has become so prominent, *kānta-bhāva* has been brushed under the carpet, ignored and dismissed, and is not considered a valid option and a legitimate goal of *rāgānuga-bhakti sādhana-bhajana*.

It is clearer and avoids confusion to opt for Jīva Gosvāmī’s terminology in Prīti Sandarbha where he establishes two types of *stāyī-bhāva*: *sākṣāt upabhogātmaka* (*nāyikā-bhāva*) and *tad-anumodanātmaka* (*sakhī-bhāva* or *suhṛd-bhāva*). The *atyantika laghu laghu* (“lowest of the low”) among the *nitya-sakhīs* have the least love for Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa has the least love for them (i.e., no *prema saubhagya*). Only these *nitya-sakhīs* have pure *tad-*

<sup>61</sup> Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā 1.121-122

<sup>62</sup> She is *mañjarī* by name only, like Kandarpa Mañjarī who is another one of the eight *vara-sakhīs*.

*anumodanātmaka*. All other *sakhīs* have various degrees of mixture of these two *bhāvas*. The conclusion is that *bhāvollāsa-rati* applies to most *sakhīs* (rather than only to *mañjarīs*) and takes place when their *suhṛd-rati* (*sakhīṭva*) exceeds their *kṛṣṇa-rati* (*nāyikāṭva*) and is nourished by it.

The definition *śloka* of *bhāvollāsa-rati* is given below,

sañcārī syāt samanā vā kṛṣṇa-ratyāḥ suhṛd-ratiḥ  
adhika puṣyamānā ced bhāvollāsa itīryate

“*Bhāvollāsa-rati* is the *bhāva* of the *sakhīs*, when their *suhṛd-rati* exceeds *kṛṣṇa-rati* and is nourished by it. (BRS 2.5.128 & Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 13.104 in VCT’s *īlīkā*)

The *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā are *apekṣika-adhika sakhīs* and their *stāyī-bhāva* is mixed (i.e., when Śrīmatī Rādhikā is present they serve her in the capacity of *sakhīs*, and when she is not present, they make arrangements to meet Kṛṣṇa as *nāyikās*). As mentioned above, only some of the *nitya-sakhīs* have pure *tad-anumodanātmaka bhāva*. The rest of the *sakhīs* (in the four other categories) have a mixture of the two *bhāvas*. The *gopīs* in the three middle categories of *nitya-sakhīs*, *prāṇa-sakhīs* and *priya-sakhīs* can therefore be called either ‘*sakhīs*’ or ‘*mañjarīs*’. These terms are interchangeable and therefore it is better to avoid using them altogether when making the distinction between the two moods of *nāyikā-bhāva* (*sākṣāt upabhogātmaka*) and *sakhī-bhāva* (*tad-anumodanātmaka* – commonly but mistakenly referred to as ‘*mañjarī-bhāva*’). To add to the confusion, Premgopal Gosvāmī (among most others) uses the term *sakhī-bhāva* to mean *nāyikā-bhāva* and *mañjarī-bhāva* to mean *sakhī-bhāva* (*tad-anumodanātmaka*). It seems that, unfortunately, hardly anyone is studying Ujjvala-Nīlamanī and Prīti-Sandarbhā.

### Debunking the term ‘*Mañjarī Bhāva*’

The concept of *mañjarī-bhāva* has been disproportionately hyped in recent history of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism (Perhaps as a natural counter-reaction to *sahajiyā* influence). Therefore, there is a need to take a closer look at the terms ‘*mañjarī*’ and ‘*mañjarī-bhāva*’ in order to place these terms in proper perspective and clear the cloud of confusion surrounding these two terms.

The word ‘*mañjarī*’ itself does not appear in Rāsa Pañcādhyāyī where *kāntā bhāva* is prominent. Neither is it mentioned in the major canons of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature like Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu, Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, and Pṛīti Sandarbha. It makes its first appearance only briefly in Rūpa Gosvāmī’s later works, Ujjvala-Nīlamanī and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gaṇoddeśa-Dīpikā. But even there the term ‘*mañjarī-bhāva*’ is not mentioned. It seems to have originated from Kuñjabihārī Dāsa Bābājī’s book Mañjarī Svarūpa Nirūpaṇa<sup>63</sup> (c. 1946). In that book, the author claims that *bhāvollāsa-rati* (so-called ‘*mañjarī-bhāva*’) is the *stāyī-bhāva* of the *mañjarīs* and that it is Rūpa Gosvāmī’s innovative addition to *rasa śāstra*.

The problem with asserting that *bhāvollāsa-rati* is the *stāyī-bhāva* of the ‘*mañjarīs*’ is that all *sakhīs* actually have *bhāvollāsa-rati*. The most one can say is that because the predominant mood of the *nitya-sakhīs* (‘*mañjarīs*’) is one of *sakhīva* rather than *nāyikāva*, then in that sense it is a permanent mood. It’s better to stick with Jīva Gosvāmī’s term *tad-anumodanātmaka* to describe their *bhāva*.

Jīva Gosvāmī, in his commentary on the *bhāvollāsa-rati śloka* in Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu states clearly that *bhāvollāsa-rati* is a *sañcārī-bhāva*, not a *stāyī-bhāva*. Furthermore, in his commentary on Ujjvala-Nīlamanī 13.104, Viśvanātha Cakravartī states that *bhāvollāsa-rati* is neither a *stāyī-bhāva*, nor a *sañcārī-bhāva*, but rather a special, distinct category. In this particular instance, *bhāvollāsa-rati* applies to Rādhārāṇī herself (who wipes Lalitā’s face while enjoying with Kṛṣṇa). Therefore, it is clearly neither a definition of ‘*mañjarī-bhāva*’ nor the exclusive *bhāva* of the so-called ‘*mañjarīs*’ (i.e., *nitya-sakhīs*).<sup>64</sup>

The term *stāyī-bhāva* applies only to the five primary *rasas* where the object of love is Kṛṣṇa, i.e., *kṛṣṇa-rati*. The types of *stāyī-bhāva* in Vraja are *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya* and the depth of the *stāyī-bhāva* is *prema*, *māna*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, etc.

As an after-thought, one may wonder what exactly does the phrase *unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti śrīyam* in the *anarpita-carīm cirāt śloka* mean? It is commonly claimed to mean *mañjarī-bhāva*. But in the light of

<sup>63</sup> Recently re-published under the title “The Hidden Treasure of Mañjarī Bhāva.”

<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, if Lalitā is present during Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s intimate pastimes, the idea that only ‘*mañjarīs*’ can be present during such *keli-vilāsa* is questionable.

the *pramāṇa* presented above (i.e., *nitya-sakhīs* have the least prema)<sup>65</sup> the question would naturally arise as to why would Mahāprabhu descend to give the lowest kind of prema? It would be far more reasonable to assume that he came to give the highest prema in the form of *kānta-bhāva*, or even, as some would say, *nāgarī-bhāva*.<sup>66</sup>

Anyway, disagreement on basic axioms is not a new thing within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.<sup>67</sup> And pluralism of opinions is a healthy sign. Let's give due respect to each *parivar*'s particular conception of what actually is the unprecedented gift Mahāprabhu came to give. And clarity will surely come to those who actually do *līlā-smaraṇa*.

We hope this short discussion is helpful in clearing the confusion over the terms *sakhī*, *mañjarī*, and *mañjarī-bhāva*.

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<sup>65</sup> Even if we refer to Rūpa and Rati Mañjarīs who are *prāṇa-sakhīs*, still their prema is inferior to that of the *parama-preṣṭha sakhīs* like Lalitā and Viśākhā.

<sup>66</sup> See Haridās Gosvāmī (an associate of Varṇśidās Bābājī) in Viṣṇupriya Mangal (or Gambhirāya Viṣṇupriya).

<sup>67</sup> We don't even seem to have a clear definition of what the term Vedānta mean.